

REV. JOHN C. MACMILLAN



THE EARLY HISTORY

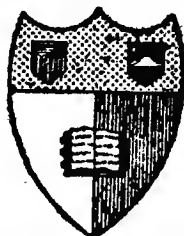
of

The Catholic Church

in

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

CORNELL UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES
ITHACA, N. Y. 14853



JOHN M. OLIN
LIBRARY

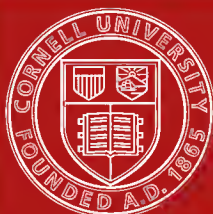
Cornell University Library
BX 1422.P7M16

The early history of the Catholic Church



3 1924 010 285 033

0101



Cornell University Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

HISTORY
OF
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



RT. REV. HENRI M. DE PONTBRIAND
Bishop of Quebec
1741 - 1760

THE EARLY HISTORY
OF
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

BY

REV. JOHN C. MACMILLAN

PASTOR OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH, CARDIGAN BRIDGE, P. E. I.



QUEBEC

PRINTED BY THE EVENEMENT PRINTING CO.

—
1905

IMPRIMATUR

† JAMES CHARLES McDONALD,

Bishop of Charlottetown.

Charlottetown, July 10th, 1905.

TO THE MEMORY

OF THE

LATE REVEREND FATHER FRANCIS

MY KIND PATRON AND FRIEND

THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE

The following pages contain a short account of the early years of the Catholic Church in Prince Edward Island.

The task of compiling the same was performed amid the many interruptions of parochial work, and was the more difficult that but few documents were available.

It is hoped, however, that the matters here treated may be found correct and that this first effort to write the history of the Diocese of Charlottetown may be received with approval.

The kind indulgence of the reading public is humbly solicited in its behalf, for of its many defects no one can be more convinced than

THE AUTHOR.

CARDIGAN BRIDGE, P. E. I.,

Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 1905.

CONTENTS

	PAGES.
CHAPTER I.—Beginnings of our Island history.—First settlers.— Earliest missionaries.—Relations between French and Indians....	1
CHAPTER II.—The Franciscan Fathers on the Island.....	9
CHAPTER III.—Population increased.—War between England and France.—Father Maillard's labors and death	15
CHAPTER IV.—Emigrants come from Nova Scotia.—Parishes are formed.—Arrival of secular priests.—Condition of the people.....	21
CHAPTER V.—Destitution of the Colonists.—Refugees of 1755.—Second siege of Louisbourg.—Deportation.....	27
CHAPTER VI.—The state of the Church in Canada after the Conquest. —The Church in St. John's Island.—Priests in the Maritime Provinces.—The Island divided into lots.—Increase of popula- tion.—Pastoral letter of Bishop Briand.....	33
CHAPTER VII.—Highland emigration.—Father James Macdonald.— His labors and death.....	41
CHAPTER VIII.—Father MacEachern's birth and early studies.—Goes to Spain.—His ordination.—Returns to Scotland.—Comes to St. John's Island	51
CHAPTER IX.—St. John's Island in 1790.—Father MacEachern applies to the Bishop of Quebec for faculties	59
CHAPTER X.—Early labors of Father MacEachern in St. John's Island.	69
CHAPTER XI.—Scarcity of priests.—Father MacEachern's views of the situation.—St. Andrew's farm purchased	79
CHAPTER XII.—Father MacEachern's labors on the Mainland of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island.....	89
CHAPTER XIII.—Father De Calonne.—He comes to St. John's Island. —His impressions of Charlottetown.....	103

	PAGES
CHAPTER XIV.—Three priests in Prince Edward Island.—Their respective missions.—The Bishop of Quebec makes known his intention of paying the Island a visit.....	111
CHAPTER XV.—First visit of a Bishop to Prince Edward Island	119
CHAPTER XVI.—Father MacEachern alone on the missions of Prince Edward Island.—He builds St. Andrew's church.—Obstacles he meets with.—His appeals for help.....	129
CHAPTER XVII.—Unsatisfactory condition of the Acadian people.—Efforts to procure priests for them.—Death of Father Augustine Macdonald and of Captain John Macdonald.....	143
CHAPTER XVIII.—Bishop Plessis visits Prince Edward Island	153
CHAPTER XIX.—Father Beaubien at Rustico.—Sickness of the people.—The Acadians of Malpeque move farther west.....	169
CHAPTER XX.—Ecclesiastical affairs in Charlottetown.—Father MacEachern appears in a clerical dress.—The cancer remedy.....	177
CHAPTER XXI.—Difficulties between Catholics and Governor Smith...	183
CHAPTER XXII.—First ecclesiastical students go to Quebec.....	189
CHAPTER XXIII.—Father MacEachern visits Cape Breton Island.—Difficulty in collecting money for students.—Accident to Father MacEachern.....	195
CHAPTER XXIV.—Father Beaubien visits the Magdalen Islands.—His labors in Prince Edward Island.—He visits Quebec.—His relations with Father MacEachern.....	203
CHAPTER XXV.—Father Cécile at Rustico.—Sends Sylvain Perry to Quebec.—Ronald Macdonald leaves the Seminary.—The Acadian missions.....	207
CHAPTER XXVI.—Efforts made to divide the Diocese of Quebec.—Father Edmund Burke's views.—Nova Scotia a Vicariate Apostolic.—Father MacEachern named Bishop of Rosen.—His consecration.....	215
CHAPTER XXVII.—Father Macdonald ordained.—Father Fitzgerald comes to Charlottetown.—First ordination in P. E. Island	225
CHAPTER XXVIII.—Father Fitzgerald's labors in Charlottetown.—Catholics come into favor.—Question of the franchise raised — Death of Archbishop Plessis.....	231
CHAPTER XXIX.—Catholic claims discussed in the Press and in the Legislature.—Catholic petition defeated.....	237
CHAPTER XXX.—Efforts of Bishop MacEachern to educate students.—His nephew's death.—Labors on the Mainland.....	245

	PAGES.
CHAPTER XXXI.—Want of clergy.—Negotiations concerning the division of the Diocese of Quebec.....	253
CHAPTER XXXII.—Events in the missions.—Father Perry ordained.—Two boys sent to Rome	261
CHAPTER XXXIII.—Father Fitzgerald's departure.—Legislature asked to vote money for a College at St. Andrew's.—Catholic Emancipation.—Bishop MacEachern becomes Bishop of Charlottetown.....	267
CHAPTER XXXIV.—Catholics succeed to their Civil Rights.—Fort Augustus settled.—Father John Macdonald.—First Catholic elected to the Assembly.—A general election.—Bishop MacEachern takes possession of his See.....	275
CHAPTER XXXV.—Founding of St. Andrew's College.—Father Walsh.—Church in Charlottetown enlarged.....	285
CHAPTER XXXVI.—Acadian missions.—Charlottetown.—Father John Macdonald.—St. Andrew's College.—Bishop MacEachern at St. John.—He builds a house at Canavoy.....	291
CHAPTER XXXVII.—Bishop MacEachern in failing health.—His last illness.—His death and burial.....	299

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY.—SETTLERS.—MISSIONARIES.—RELATIONS BETWEEN FRENCH AND INDIANS.

The discovery of Prince Edward Island is involved in great uncertainty. English writers, as a rule, claim the honor for John and Sebastian Cabot, whilst the French no less confidently assert, that it belongs by right to John Verazzani, a Florentine navigator in the pay of the French King. These contradictory opinions they back up with arguments, which instead of throwing light on the subject, seem to clothe it in deeper obscurity.

From reliable testimonies taken from both sides we glean the following facts, which serve as the basis of the claims advanced by the two nations. In the month of May, 1497, John Cabot and his son Sebastian, with a commission from Henry VII of England, set sail for North America, in the hope of finding a westerly passage to China and Japan. They reached the American Continent in safety, went north as far as Labrador, sailed down the Strait of Belle Isle, and having entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence returned home to report their success to the English King. The latter immediately proceeded to take formal possession of all the territory sighted during this voyage, though, in all probability, the Cabots never set foot on many of the lands thus claimed by their Royal Patron. Their subsequent voyages were, in most respects, similar to the first. They create a probability, but by no means a certainty, that the Cabots are the real discoverers of Prince Edward Island.

Henry VIII, who succeeded to the Throne in 1509, had little time

to bestow on voyages of discovery. More eager to acquire jurisdiction in spiritual affairs than to extend his temporal possessions, he turned his thoughts to Rome rather than to America, and spent in quarrelling with the Pope, the time that might have been better employed, in making good the claims to American territory advanced by his illustrious father.

To Henry VIII succeeded Mary whose reign was one of perpetual strife and turmoil at home, and consequently not favorable to the extension of English rule in foreign countries. In this way the discoveries of the Cabots were lost to view, and almost forgotten by the country in whose interest they had laboured.

In the meanwhile France was giving evidence of marine activity. The eldest daughter of the Church, she saw in the newly discovered continent a splendid field for the Gospel, and accordingly, in the year 1524, John Verazzani received a commission from the French King to go out to the American Continent on a voyage of discovery. Verazzani explored the sea-coast from North Carolina to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and took possession of the entire region in the name of the Crown of France. Ten years later, came the real discoverer of Canada, the illustrious Jacques Cartier, who landing on the mainland of the New Continent, raised the cross entwined with the "Fleur de Lys," thus laying claim to the country in the name of France and of Religion. Before effecting a landing on Canadian soil, Jacques Cartier had skirted the northern coast of Prince Edward Island, which he regarded as a portion of the mainland. It was not till some years afterwards, that its insularity was discovered, when it received the name of St. John's Island, given to it, as some assert, by Champlain, because he reached its shores for the first time on the 24th of June, the Feast of St. John the Baptist. Of this latter assertion, however, we have no certainty. What we do know is, that Champlain, in the records of his third voyage, speaks of it in a way, which seems to indicate that as early as 1603 it was commonly known by that name.

Its early history manifests great neglect on the part of the Mother Country. Indeed, for more than a century from the time of Jacques Cartier, France made little or no effort to promote its colonization.

In 1653 Nicholas Denys, a French merchant, obtained a grant of all the islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, at which time St. John's Island was peopled by only a few savages, generally of the Micmac Tribe. Denys' occupation of the Island produced no definite results. It remained without colonists till the year 1719, when it was again granted by the King to one of his noblemen Count Saint Pierre, for the purpose of carrying on fisheries.

With this concession to Count Saint Pierre the history of St. John's Island properly begins. Heretofore almost entirely neglected, it now became the point towards which converged two streams of emigrants, the one from France, the other from Acadia or Nova Scotia.

At the time of which we write, France was slowly recovering from the calamitous effects of a prolonged war with England, in which the American possessions of the rival nations had taken an active part. When peace was concluded, at Utrecht in 1713, France lost a great part of her possessions in North America, by ceding to England the Colonies of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Hudson Bay Territory. To make up for their loss, she determined to make more strenuous efforts to colonize her remaining dependencies, and on this account, St. John's Island began to receive a larger share of attention. Hence, after 1719, immigrants began to arrive in the Island, some directly from France, others, and by far the greater number, from Nova Scotia. As fishing was the chief industry of the colonists, they usually settled along the bays and rivers, and, as early as the year 1722, we find ten families at St. Peter's Harbor, five at Port La Joie, three on the banks of the Hillsborough River, and two at East Point, while succeeding years saw flourishing settlements spring up at Tracadie, Nanfrage, Savage Harbor, Three Rivers and Malpeque.

Port La Joie, where Count St. Pierre established his headquarters, was situated on an eminence overlooking, from the west, the entrance to Charlottetown Harbor. Here was the centre to which converged the trade of the outlying settlements, here was erected a small fort, in which was stationed a garrison for the protection of the Colony, and here, in the month of April, 1721, arrived Rev. René Charles De Breslay, the first priest to set foot on St. John's Island.

Father De Breslay was a priest of the Community of St. Sulpice, who had already spent some years in Canada. Born in 1658 of a noble family, he was for a number of years, attached to the Court of Louis XIV, where the sun of royal favor seemed to light his path to a brilliant future; but the gaities of court life did not satisfy a soul called to higher purposes, and so to the surprise of his friends, he turned his back on the vanities of the world and entered the Seminary of St. Sulpice to prepare for the holy priesthood.

Almost immediately after his ordination, he set out for Canada, and arrived at Montreal, on August 3rd, 1694. Here he was appointed curate and afterwards parish priest of the Church of Notre Dame.

In March of 1703 he was entrusted with the newly organized parish of St. Louis, situated at one extremity of Montreal Island, where he devoted himself to the spiritual care of the French and Indians, and signalized his pastorate by his determined efforts in the cause of temperance. To prevent the Indians from procuring intoxicating drink, he induced them to move to a little island near at hand owned by Mr. Vaudreuil, Governor of Canada, where he build a church for them, and laboured for sixteen years to promote their spiritual welfare. His efforts, however, were thwarted in the end. Mr. Vaudreuil gave the island in charge of an agent, with authority to sell liquor to the Indians. Against this proceeding Father De Breslay warmly protested but without avail. The paltry gain to be derived from the baneful traffic was of more consequence to the authorities than the salvation of the Indians. He therefore decided to go home to France, and plead the cause of his mission before the authorities of the Motherland. Here he met with only partial success. He was indeed able to impress the civil authorities with the justice of his contention, and they expressed their willingness to back him out, in his efforts to suppress the liquor traffic; but his ecclesiastical superiors, fearing that his having opposed the Governor might hamper his future usefulness in Montreal, did not permit his return to the same mission, but decided to give it over to another member of the Community.

While these negotiations were going on in Paris, Father De Breslay

met with Count St. Pierre, who was there making arrangements for the colony about to be established in St. John's Island. Wishing to have a priest, to minister to his colonists, the Count found in Father De Breslay one whose piety, zeal and experience eminently fitted him for the purpose. He, at once, laid before him his plans, and entreated him to join the emigrants, who were soon to set out for St. John's Island. Here was an excellent opportunity for the exercise of missionary zeal, and Father De Breslay was glad to take advantage of it, as he could not return to Montreal. He declared himself quite willing to go to St. John's Island, provided he could obtain the permission of Father Lechassier, at this time Superior General of the Community of St. Sulpice. The permission was granted far more readily than he had anticipated. For some time, in fact, the Sulpicians had been considering the advisability of establishing, in these Maritime Provinces, a seminary somewhat on the lines of the one founded at Quebec by the Society of Foreign Missions, and they had made a beginning of the kind, at Port Royal, which they subsequently abandoned. Father Lechassier therefore cherished the hope that, as many wealthy capitalists had joined the company of Count St. Pierre, St. John's Island might, in the near future, furnish facilities for carrying out this plan, and hence, readily consented to the departure of Father De Breslay.

Before setting out, the latter requested that a second priest be permitted to accompany him, and in consideration of his advanced age, his prayer was granted. Choice was made of Reverend Marie Anselme de Metivier, also a Sulpician, who had been parish priest for a few years, at Longue Pointe, near Montreal, whence he had returned to France. Having soon grown tired of the monastery of the Mother House in Paris, he was glad when asked to become Father De Breslay's companion on the mission of St. John's Island.

These two priests arrived early in the spring of 1721, and immediately took up their residence at Port La Joie, where in the following year they built a modest little church dedicated to St. John the Evangelist. This little church was the first place of worship erected in St. John's Island. In it were performed the earliest religious cere-

monies of which we have any account. On July 14th, 1722, it witnessed a baptism of more than ordinary interest, the record of which is so peculiar, that I here translate it in full. "On the 14th of July was baptized Peter Francis de Paul, born at 3 o'clock yesterday morning, son of Louis Denis de la Ronde, Esquire, Knight of the military Order of St. Louis, Lieutenant of the King in St. John's Island; and of Madame Louis Chartier de Lotbinière.

"The Godfather was Mr. Robert David Gotteville de Belle-Isle, Knight of St. Louis and Governor of St. John's Island, etc.

"The Godmother was Lady Louise de Kervin, Maid of Honor to the Most Excellent Princess Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Orleans, and wife of His Excellency Count St. Pierre, First Knight of Her Royal Highness the said Duchess of Orleans, Grand Master of Her household and proprietor of the said Island of St. John.

"Witnesses, Louis Denis de la Ronde, the father; Mr. Aubert Lord of Demar, member of the General Council of Quebec, and Director General of the said Island, who have hereunto subscribed their names according to the established rule."

The above record containing so many illustrious names would seem to indicate an advanced state of social refinement in St. John's Island. It might lead the casual reader to the opinion, that even in those remote days, the Colony could boast of titled gentry among its inhabitants. But what would such people be doing in this wild rude country? Why should persons of rank and nobility exchange the luxuries of Parisian society for the wants and privations of colonial life? That some officers of the army were here is doubtless true, for the soldier must ever follow the flag. That the missionary, who by vow had left all to follow Christ, should come hither and bury himself in a living grave of toil and hardship is not to be wondered at; but it is scarcely credible that devotees of fashion, blind slaves of the world's conventional forms, had turned their backs on the advantages of position, closed their ears to the siren song of social pleasures, steeled their hearts against the allurements of court favor, to take up the monotonous burden of life amongst the early colonists. We, therefore, venture the opinion that Lady Louise, wife of Count St.

Pierre, and perhaps, others whose distinguished names grace the records of Port La Joie never saw St. John's Island. Their names may be mere evidence of a custom, by which persons of rank sometimes assisted by proxy at certain religious functions.

Be this as it may, the ceremonies performed in the Church of St. John the Evangelist did not always call together such a galaxy of distinguished persons. A few years later, we find an officer of the garrison and one of the ladies of the Fort, standing sponsors at the baptism of an Indian child.

We have in this a striking example of the good feeling which always existed between the French and Indians, and I trust my readers will pardon me the digression, whilst I make brief reference to this pleasant feature of the early history of St. John's Island.

An address delivered, some years ago, before the Historical Society of Chignecto, refers to this matter. After relating the incidents mentioned above it goes on to say: "The policy that dictated such acts readily accounts for the close brotherhood between the French and Indians, a connection that British power was never able to break. There is too much truth in the claim that while one nation presented the point of the sword to the Savages of the New World, the other upheld to them the virtues of the Cross. It may give one a better idea of human nature, when it is remembered that the Micmac Savages never betrayed those whom they considered their friends. A generation ago a reward was set up for the head of Le Loutre; yet he travelled the wilds of Nova Scotia in perfect safety with Indian guides and companions ¹."

This good understanding between the French and Indians may be attributed to two principal causes—the colonial policy of France, and the teaching of the missionaries.

France acquired new territory not so much to extend her temporal possessions, as to open up new fields of labor for the Church, whose mission is to teach all nations. Her aim was not merely to colonize but to christianize. Hence, with every band of emigrants went forth

1. — Lecture by W.C. Milner, Esq., Collector of Customs at Sackville, N. B.

the missionary. Like a true disciple of the Divine Master, he set out without scrip or purse, the very incarnation of heroism and devotedness. To him the Indian was as dear as his pale-faced brother. To him they were equal, for he saw in each an immortal soul redeemed by the same blood of Jesus Christ, and destined to the same eternal inheritance. These pious sentiments he inculcated upon his hearers, and his teaching took deep root in their hearts, for it was confirmed by his own example. In the discharge of his duties he made no exception of persons but became "all things to all men that he might save all ¹." This gave the seal of authority to his words when he exhorted the French colonists to love their Indian brethren; and the result of his teaching was that the mutual relations between the two races seemed a happy realization of the truth taught by the Psalmist: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity ²."

What a contrast to the conduct of the English colonists, who, in the words of Parkman, "regarded the Indians less as men than as vicious and dangerous animals ³."

1 — I Cor. IX. 22.

2 — Ps. CXXXII. 1.

3 — *Half Century of conflict*, vol. I, Pag. 215.

CHAPTER II.

FRANCISCANS IN ST. JOHN'S ISLAND.

We have seen that the Sulpicians were desirous of founding a seminary in St. John's Island ; and for that reason two priests of their Community came thither in 1721. Their hopes, however, were doomed to disappointment. A stay of two years was sufficient to convince Father De Breslay that such an institution must remain a practical impossibility for many years to come. Nay more. The poverty of the colonists, their small numbers, their isolation, the many privations they endured and the small profits arising from the speculations of Count St. Pierre, rendered the support of two missionaries a heavy burden for the people. It was, therefore, deemed advisable to call in a member of one of the mendicant orders, whose life of perpetual self-denial would render his support but a small inconvenience to the colonists.

With this end in view Father Michael Brulai, a Franciscan, a monastery of whose order had been recently founded at Louisbourg, Cape Breton Island, came in to Port La Joie to confer with Father De Breslay regarding the future management of the mission ; and a short time afterwards Reverend Father Gaulin, Vicar General of the Bishop of Quebec, came over from Nova Scotia for the same purpose. The result of their conference was that the Sulpicians gave over to the Franciscans the spiritual care of St. John's Island. Father De Breslay bade adieu to his flock at Port La Joie in the

spring of 1723, and Father De Metivier did likewise, somewhat later in the same year.

Their place was soon taken by a Franciscan, Father Louis Barbet Dulongon, who came hither from the monastery at Louisbourg. Thus the work, begun by the disciples of Monsieur Olier, was taken up by the humble sons of St. Francis, who watered with heroic labor the mustard seed of religion planted in the colony by Father De Breslay. For thirty years from this date the Franciscans were the only clergy on the Island. They made their home at Port La Joie, where they served in the capacity of chaplains to the garrison, living in comparative retirement isolated from their community, succeeding each other one by one, as directed by their superiors, and ministering to the spiritual wants of the colonists and Indians scattered far and near along the seaboard. From 1723 till 1754 no less than nineteen friars bore in succession the burden of missionary toil in St. John's Island.

Many a dreary tale of privation and hardship might be told of these intrepid God-fearing man. The most eloquent tongue cannot describe, nor the most vivid imagination picture the fatigues they endured, and the difficulties they encountered, as they went from place to place, generally on foot, carrying with them everything required for the celebration of the Holy Mysteries. Alas, we know too little of their heroism and self-denial. Brought up in the school of St. Francis of Assisi, wherein humility is made the corner-stone of the spiritual edifice, they sought not the glamor of earthly glory, and hence, wrote nothing concerning themselves. They left us only the registers, in which they recorded the baptisms, marriages and burials at which they officiated during their visits to the various settlements.

From the meagre hints furnished by one of these registers, the learned author of *Une Seconde Acadie* draws a pen picture of a journey, made in mid-winter by Father Kergariou, one of these Franciscans. The book as described by the writer is yellow with age, and shews signs of having been thoroughly soaked with water, perhaps in a rain-storm to which the missionary was exposed while making his way from one settlement to another. From it, however,

he constructs a story replete with interest, which though suffering somewhat from our translation, we here present to our readers.

“ It was the winter of 1726. During the cold season the shores of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, usually stern in appearance, put on a look of sombre grandeur, seen nowhere but in the far North. Immense fields of ice float at the mercy of the winds in that inland sea. Days, whose noonday light is reduced by fog and haze to the sombre hue of fading twilight, are often followed by intervals of such brilliant sunshine, that the eye can scarcely endure the glare reflected from the white coverlit of snow and ice.

“ At the remote period of which we make mention, if one could have obtained a bird’s eye view of St. John’s Island on a winter’s day, he could have noticed, here and there, certain areas white with snow, which tended to relieve the monotonous appearance of the virgin forest. These were the clearings made by the settlers, whereon were built their houses, from whose chimneys arose miniature clouds of smoke. Near by isolated trees of fir and spruce looked, in their snowy covering, like hunters returning from the chase clothed in the white fur of their fallen victims. From Port La Joie to St. Peter’s Harbor, stretched a long silvery band indicating the icy course of the East River, which served as the winter highway between the two settlements.

“ On a day in January, two travellers, on snowshoes, made their way, by this route, toward St. Peter’s Harbor. One wore the habit of a Franciscan Friar, with the cowl drawn tightly over his head, for protection from the cold. It was Father Kergariou, who was on his way to St. Peter’s, accompanied by one of the inhabitants of Port La Joie whom he had chosen as his guide.

“ The zealous missionary thus sets out on a journey of almost one hundred and fifty miles, to bring the consolations of religion to a few colonists and Indians. He might meet with snow-falls, excessive cold and blinding drifts, but what of that ? He kept on courageously, ever mindful of the Good Shepherd, whose divine example taught him to lay down his life for his flock.

“ He must have left Port La Joie after the 24th of January, for, on that day he had inscribed a record of baptism there, and he probably reached St. Peter’s Harbor about the 4th of February, for on the 5th he there supplied the ceremonies of baptism to a child born on the 18th of the preceding month, and who had received only private baptism because there was no priest nearer than Port La Joie.

“ At St. Peter’s he remained two months, catechising the children, singing high masses for the dead, preaching the word of God, hearing confessions and visiting the sick. Towards the end of Lent, he set out for Malpeque, over forty miles to the westward, whither his path lay by the edge of the sea, covered at this time with a thick bed of ice and snow.

“ The Micmacs of Malpeque were awaiting his coming, for the missionaries never failed to pay them a visit at this season, to afford them an opportunity of approaching the sacraments during Paschal Time. His welcome here was no less sincere than that extended to him by his own countrymen, though it was, perhaps, less demonstrative owing to the reserve peculiar to the Indians. But with all their kindness, a stay in their village was one of the greatest trials that fell to the lot of the missionary. His only shelter was the rude wigwam open to all kinds of weather, and often dirty to an intolerable degree. A few spruce boughs, which served for seats by day and for beds by night, constituted their entire stock of furniture. From the fire, placed in the middle, rose a thick smoke, which, carried about by the currents of air, added greatly to the discomfort. Men, women and children were huddled together in the narrow space, while the dogs moved about at will, barking and snarling in perfect freedom, and sleeping here and there, lying sometimes on the ground and not unfrequently on the people.

“ In such lodgings the missionary was obliged to live during his stay at Malpeque. The records he kept at the time bear evidence of his destitute condition. The hand-writing is in marked contrast to that of former entries. It is very irregular in form and almost illegible, showing that it was done whilst the writer was in an uncomfortable and unsteady position. He did not even have ink at his disposal. Its

place had to be supplied by a dark liquid that seems to have been a mixture of water and soot ¹."

Such were the privations endured by the good missionary as he strove to keep alive the fire of divine faith, during the early years of the colony. Labors and hardships, however, did not subdue his ardor nor lessen his charity ; nor did the poverty of his surroundings shorten his stay at Malpeque. He remained with the Indians, continuing the same good work he had done at St. Peter's, and did not reach his home at Port La Joie till spring was well advanced.

1 — *Une Seconde Acadie*, Casgrain, pages 45 et seq.

CHAPTER III.

POPULATION INCREASED.—WAR BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE.—FATHER MAILLARD.

We have already stated that the colonization of St. John's Island began with its concession to Count St. Pierre, and that in 1721 twenty families constituted the entire population. In 1728 this number had increased to fifty-seven families, of which eighteen resided at St. Peter's, fifteen at Savage Harbor, fourteen at Port La Joie, four at Tracadie, three at East Point and three at Malpeque. The census returns of 1735 show an increase of twenty-four families, making a total of five hundred and forty-three souls, distributed as follows :

At St. Peter's Harbor.....	294
At Tracadie.....	39
At Port Lajoie.....	114
At St. Peter's Lake.....	35
At Malpeque.....	31
At East Point.....	18
At Three Rivers	10

To these must be added about fifty-six Micmacs, living near Malpeque. Until the year 1744 the same gradual increase of population continued, and new settlements were formed at Bedeque, Point Prime, Fortune Bay and along the banks of the Hillsborough, York and Elliot Rivers.

In 1744 war was declared between England and France. No sooner

were its flames enkindled in the old countries, than their possessions in America took up the quarrel, and entered with energy and zeal on armed hostilities. The French colonists were first in the field. Duquesnel, the Governor at Louisbourg, fitted out an expedition, commanded by Duvivier, an officer of merit, who first captured Fort Canseau in eastern Nova Scotia, then sailing up Northumberland Strait to Bay Verte, landed his forces and marched overland to Port Royal.

Although Nova Scotia was, at this time, an English colony, a large majority of its inhabitants were of French origin, and Duquesnel was in hopes that their love of France would cause them to flock to his standard and take up arms against the English. In this, however, he was disappointed. The priests of Acadia exhorted the people to remain firm in their allegiance to the Crown of England, so that only a mere handful took up arms, and the expedition consequently proved a failure.

Those officious makers of history, who attribute the misfortunes of the Acadian people to their supposed too great reliance on the word of their priests, would do well to study this episode in Canadian history. Had the Acadian clergy ranged themselves on the side of Duquesnel, had they called on the people to stand up for their own flesh and blood, had they exhorted them to take up arms in the cause of their well-beloved Motherland, had they proclaimed that the time was come to strike a strong blow for freedom and to drive out, forever, the hated foreigner, yea, even had they remained neutral, the people would have risen to a man and enrolled themselves under the banner of Duvivier. What the result would have been, we can now only conjecture. An uprising of the Acadians in Nova Scotia, backed by their friends in Cape Breton and St. John's Island, could not have proved otherwise than disastrous to England. It would probably have swept away every trace of British rule in Nova Scotia, and have given to the map of North America a different appearance from that which it presents to-day.

From a letter of Intendant Hocquart to the Bishop of Quebec, dated May 12th, 1745, we learn that the French King was not pleased with the conduct of the Acadian priests on this occasion. The letter

states that Father Desenclaves, pastor at Port Royal, earnestly exhorted his parishioners to continue in their loyalty to the English King. Another priest, Father Dechauvreulx went so far as to threaten with excommunication any of his flock, who should take up arms against the English; whilst a third, Father De Miniac, Vicar General of the Bishop of Quebec, stationed near the Mines, was equally decided in his views of loyalty to England. Such, then, was the conduct of the Acadian clergy during this war. Ambassadors of Him, whose birth brought peace to men of goodwill, they spoke out in the cause of peace, and advised their hearers to persevere in their allegiance to the British flag. The horrors of the deportation of 1755, followed by the outrages of 1758, the persistent malice of writers, who seek to justify these barbarities, are an example of the gratitude both priests and people have received, in return for their loyal adherence to British interests.

The hatred of France, which had long rankled in the breasts of the people of New England, was fanned into flame by the invasion of Nova Scotia. A movement was, at once, set on foot in Boston, to arrest the progress of the enemy and in a short time a fleet in command of Captain Pepperel, was sent against Louisbourg, one of the most strongly fortified places held by the French in America. This fleet, reinforced by Captain Warren, with five ships of war, arrived at Louisbourg on the 8th of May, 1745. The fortress held out only a short time. Before the end of June the garrison capitulated, and the flag of England floated triumphantly from the battlements of the conquered city.

Some days previously, Pepperel had dispatched a detachment of men to St. John's Island, with orders to destroy all the property they could find, and carry off the inhabitants. A part of this detachment landed at Three Rivers, where a rich Frenchman named Roma had laid the foundation of a prosperous settlement on a tongue of land between the Montague and Brudenell Rivers. Roma's property was soon laid in ruins, and he himself narrowly escaped with his life. A company of the troops landed also at Port La Joie, whose only protection was a garrison of fifteen men. Here was carried on the same

work of destruction, which marked their descent on Three Rivers. The fort was speedily demolished and the village given over to the flames. The inhabitants fled in terror into the interior of the country, whither they were hotly pursued by the English. The pursuit, however, did not last long. A union having been effected between the garrison, the colonists and the Indians, they suddenly attacked the English troops and drove them back to their ships. During the remainder of the campaign St. John's Island was left in comparative peace, the garrison stationed at Louisbourg being barely sufficient to defend the city, much less to carry war into the outlying settlements. In 1748 the war came to an end. The rival nations signed the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, by the terms of which Cape Breton and St. John's Islands remained subject to the Crown of France.

The details of this war may appear foreign to our subject, but we have entered into them somewhat minutely on account of the influence they exercised over St. John's Island. During the war the affairs of the colony remained at a standstill, or rather, took a backward step. The gradual increase of population, which had obtained prior to the year 1744, now practically ceased through want of immigration, whilst the seven or eight hundred inhabitants residing on the Island at that date, were greatly diminished in number by the recall of the garrison to Louisbourg and the destruction which followed the invasion of 1745. Only fifteen regular troops were left on the Island, during the siege of Louisbourg, and these were dispatched to Quebec shortly after the capitulation. The withdrawal of the troops necessitated the departure of the chaplain, whose only support was a small annuity from the French Government, granted in consideration of his services to the garrison. Hence Father Kvielze, the chaplain at the out-break of the war, left the Island in May 1744, and for five years, the people were deprived of the services of a priest. In this way both the spiritual and temporal progress of the colony was retarded by Duquesnel's untimely invasion of Nova Scotia.

With the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, a much-needed change was effected in the colonial policy of France. It was now clearly demonstrated, that to preserve even a foothold in North America, the Mother

Country would have to watch over her colonies with greater vigilance.

Accordingly the fortifications at Louisbourg were repaired, at an enormous expense, and a garrison sufficient for its defence was placed over the city. St. John's Island, too, received a large measure of attention. Just now it stood higher than ever in the estimation of the home authorities, as its fertile soil gave goodly promise of furnishing the supplies required by the garrison at Louisbourg. A new Governor, Mr. Denis de Bonaventure, arrived at Port La Joie, in 1749, and was followed, somewhat later in the same year, by Rev. Patrick Lagrée, a priest of the Order of St. Francis. Civil and religious affairs were soon reorganized. Port La Joie was speedily rebuilt, its fortifications repaired, and a garrison stationed over it as of old. Father Lagrée began his visits to the distant settlements like his venerable predecessors, and soon the hum of prosperity dispelled the monotony which had succeeded the invasion of 1745.

About this time, too, Reverend Father Maillard, who made his home on the mainland, paid annual visits to the Indians of St. John's Island. They had chosen, for their place of residence, the part of the Island west of Malpeque of which, by agreement with the French, they were allowed to remain in undisturbed possession.

Thither Father Maillard made his way every year, and labored for them as well as for their brethren of the Mainland, with such remarkable success, as to earn for himself the title "Apostle of the Micmacs." It is impossible now to ascertain by whom they were first converted to the Faith of Christ. Who first told them the story of the crucified Redeemer is unknown. But one fact which the student of their history cannot fail to discover is, that Father Maillard did more than any other to keep alive the holy flame, enkindled in their hearts by their first missionaries. With true apostolic charity he devoted himself to their welfare, lived amongst them, shared their privations, sympathized with them in their sorrows and participated in their joys. He mastered their language that he might instruct them in their own tongue, and after the lapse of more than a century, the effects of his disinterested labours are still discernible amongst

them. The name of Father Maillard is unfortunately not sufficiently known to us. Had he been one of those whom the world calls great, the pages of history would be eloquent with his praise; but as he was only a lowly follower of Jesus of Nazareth, the world can afford to leave his name in oblivion. Many a labourer in the Lord's Vineyard, wearing himself out in the service of his fellow-men, goes down to an early grave the victim of his charity, and in a few years his name is forgotten. Many a noble missionary, whose heroism of soul gave joy to the Angels of God, is unknown to history; while those, who figured in the palaces of the rich and at the Courts of Princes, have their deeds recorded in tomes that encumber our libraries. Such are the ways of the world. It forgets the truly great, and cherishes the memories of those who "have flattered its rank breath and bowed to its idolatries a patient knee." Its writers pass lightly over the lives of the ones, who wrought for God and for Him alone, leaving thereby deep valleys unfilled, along the pathway of history. To the lovers of justice and fairplay it belongs to fill up with truth those blanks in history's page, which proclaim, with unanswerable logic, the necessity of that final court of revision, before which we must all appear at the consummation of time.

Perhaps no figure of Canadian history has received a greater share of silence than Father Maillard. No chiselled urn marks his last resting place, no sculptured marble nor imperishable brass records his virtues. He died at Halifax in 1762 and was laid to rest in a Protestant cemetery, as there was no burial place for Catholics in Halifax until years after his death.

CHAPTER IV

EMIGRANTS FROM NOVA SCOTIA.—ARRIVAL OF PRIESTS.—PARISHES FORMED.—CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

The new fortifications erected at Louisbourg did not escape the watchful eyes of the English statesmen. They saw, at once, that so powerful a fortress on Cape Breton Island, would prove a permanent menace to the neighbouring peninsula, and for this reason, they resolved to build a city in Nova Scotia, whose position and strength would off set the strategic advantages of Louisbourg. Halifax was accordingly founded in 1749 by Lord Cornwallis, Governor of Nova Scotia.

This event marks an era in the history of the French inhabitants of the Maritime Provinces. Up to this time, those living in Nova Scotia had been treated with a fair measure of kindness by their conquerors. They did not, perhaps, enjoy all the privileges which a magnanimous victor sometimes permits to the vanquished; but in general, they had no grave cause of complaint. Indeed, the English had been too weak to be other than kind and conciliatory towards them. With only a small garrison at Port Royal, they could ill afford to unduly harass a people now numbered by thousands. But no sooner was Halifax founded, and a strong force of regular troops posted in the Province, than Cornwallis threw off the mask of kindness, and entered upon a policy of deceit and treachery towards the Acadian People. An oath of allegiance, which did violence to their inmost feelings, was demanded of them, and they were forced to purchase their rights of citizenship at the price of sentiments founded in

flesh and blood. At one time, they were threatened with immediate deportation at another, they were told that their property would be confiscated to the Crown, should they dare leave the English possessions. To add to their misfortunes, the boundaries between the English and French colonies were not clearly defined, a circumstance which led to perpetual feuds between the colonists, and afforded many a pretext for the treacherous policy of Cornwallis. The condition of the poor Acadians was indeed pitiable, and no wonder that they availed themselves of every means in their power to escape from the worse than Egyptian bondage, under which they suffered in Nova Scotia. Hence we find them evading the vigilance of Cornwallis and flocking secretly to St. John's Island. From this cause the parish of Cobequid, which contained twelve hundred souls in 1749, was reduced to three hundred in five years, and in the same interval as many as five hundred departed from Piquit and three hundred from Grand Pré.

By this influx of settlers, the population of St. John's Island had so increased, that the chaplain at Port La Joie was no longer able to perform all the duties, which the care of so many souls must have entailed. Even when his flock numbered only a few hundreds, the distance from one settlement to another, the absence of roads and the want of suitable conveyances rendered the missionary's life one of hardship and danger. The most he could do was, to pay an annual visit to the various settlements, in order that the faithful might approach the sacraments within the year. Now that the population had grown to thousands, even this was too much for one to accomplish, and the need of priests began to be sorely felt by the colonists. Those who lived in the more populous centres, began to organize parishes in the prayerful hope, that the Lord would send priests to cultivate this neglected part of his vineyard. Churches were built at St. Peter's Harbor, and on the north bank of the Hillsborough River near what is now called Scotch Fort, as early as the year 1751, and only the presence of a priest was necessary to raise these places to the standing of regularly constituted parishes. To obtain priests, however, was a serious difficulty. The Bishop of Quebec had none to spare, those at his disposal being barely sufficient to administer to the

people living in the interior of the diocese. The “harvest was indeed great but the workmen few.” The Bishop, therefore, besought the “Lord of the Harvest” to take pity on this abandoned region, and send to it a few holy priests to teach the people the way of God’s law. His prayer was speedily answered.

He had at this time, residing in Paris, a Vicar General, the Abbé de l’Isle-Dieu, who was in great favor with the French Government. To him the Bishop made known the condition of religious affairs in St. John’s Island, and asked him to seek out in France a few priests, who would come hither to reside.

The Abbé set to work at once, and in a short time, succeeded beyond expectation. He was able to induce the Government to defray all expenses, and four priests consented to come, and share the privations incidental to their calling, in the new Colony. The first to arrive was Father Girard, who, in 1752, took up his residence at Point Prim, where the people had erected a neat little church and parochial house, a short time before ¹. Father Girard had already spent several years in Nova Scotia, and had experienced many trials and hardships in common with the people whom he served.

In the same year Father Peronnel arrived at Scotchfort where a church dedicated to St. Louis ² had been built in the preceeding year. His health soon failed, and in about a year he was obliged to resign his charge, and after spending a short time at St. Peter’s, he returned to France, where he died. In 1753, Father Biscaret was appointed pastor of St. Peter’s parish, one of the most populous and thriving settlements of the Island, and where, as we have already said, a church had been built in 1751 ³.

1— This church stood on land now owned by Mr. Alexander Macmillan, where the adjoining cemetery is still to be seen.

2— The cemetery of St. Louis was in use long after the conquest of Canada, and may still be seen on the farm of Mr. John McKenzie, of Scotchfort.

3— The church of St. Peter’s stood on land now owned by Mr. John Sinnott, where the cemetery is still pointed out. The bell, belonging to the Church, was found in 1870, by Mr. Barry while ploughing in an adjoining field. It was recast and is now in use in the church of St. Alexis at Rollo Bay.

While Father Biscaret was organizing the parish of St. Peter's, Malpeque, to the west, was gladdened by the arrival of a resident pastor, Reverend Father Cassiet. After a stay of only a few months, he was transferred to St. Louis to replace Father Peronnel, and was succeeded at Malpeque by Father Dosqué, who arrived later in the same year ¹. Thus the close of the year 1753 found five priests in St. John's Island, the four just mentioned and a fifth, Father Aubré, a Franciscan who succeeded Father Lagrée as chaplain of Port La Joie, in October, 1752. Ecclesiastical affairs were thus, well organized. The spiritual wants of the people were now abundantly supplied, thanks to the earnest efforts put forth in their behalf by the Abbé de l'Isle-Dieu.

This worthy priest took a lively interest in the affairs of St. John's Island. From the Capital of the Mother Country he watched over its people, and labored to promote their spiritual and temporal welfare. When, at the request of the Bishop of Quebec, he first applied for priests, only two volunteered their services. These together with the chaplain at Port La Joie, seemed too few to meet the views of the zealous representative of the Bishop, and he therefore writes from Paris: "It is impossible that three priests can suffice to attend to three thousand souls. Moreover," he continues, "as the Crown has this year made an appropriation for the support of four missionaries, it would be a pity that only three were employed. It is absolutely necessary that there be a sufficient number of priests, not only for the good of religion, but also to direct the people how to cultivate the land and establish homes for themselves, so that they may be able to support themselves, and not continue at the expense of the Government as they have been for the last three years."

The reason why they were unable to support themselves he assigns as follows: "Because they did not have missionaries, who would form them into parishes; a work (he adds) as beneficial to the State

1 — The church of Malpeque, dedicated to the Holy Family, was situated on land now owned by Mr. Henry Newcombe, of Low Point. The cemetery that lay near it has disappeared. It has been completely swept away by the waves.

as it is to the Church ; a work so important, that without it colonies and subjects will prove useless to France, unless, indeed, they cultivate the soil and form permanent settlements, which will serve to draw to them those who still live under the flag of England. " The worthy priest's desire was soon accomplished, as we have already stated. In 1754 he wrote : " The number of missionaries in St. John's Island is now complete, and amply suffices for the wants of the actual settlers."

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to offer any comments on the sentiments expressed in the letter above quoted. They reveal a wonderful foresight on the part of the writer, and a knowledge of colonial affairs rarely to be found in one so far distant from the scenes of which he writes. Had the statesmen of the Mother Country been as wise and as farseeing, they would have avoided many grievous mistakes in their colonial policy, and France would have been spared many humiliations on this American Continent. The Abbé de L'Isle-Dieu's theory of colonization places the Church in the foreground. The priest is the living centre of the movement, and his ministry, the foundation on which the whole fabric has to rest. The colonists needed the enlightened counsels of the missionary, not only to guide them in the pathway of spiritual perfection, but also to direct them in the administration of their temporal affairs. To-day, when the trend of public opinion is to relegate the priest to the sacristy, and confine his sphere of action to things purely spiritual, the question may well be raised : have we really advanced in civilization during the years which separate us from the time of the Abbé de L'Isle-Dieu ? The world with its touchstone of material prosperity will, doubtless, answer in the affirmative ; but they, who are imbued with the " argument of things that appear not," will prudently hesitate before refusing a place of honour to the ministers of the Church, in the great work of colonial development.

The arrival of priests in St. John's Island and the consequent work of parochial organization gladdened the heart of the Bishop of Quebec. He justly rejoiced to find this remote part of his diocese so well provided for, and most fervent were his thanks to his zealous Vicar

General for his generous efforts in its behalf. But who can picture the joy of the colonists themselves at the happy change? Who can describe their delight, to hear once more the joyous sounds of the church bell pealing forth from the belfry, the welcome summons to prayer? The gloomy years of their isolation are now a thing of the past. The months of weary waiting for a visit of the missionary are hallowed into pleasant memories, under the mellowing influence of present happiness. Now they have continually among them a priest, the wise counsellor and friend, whose stay in the parish is a pledge of a greater presence — that of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

A stranger visiting St. John's Island, in those days, might well fancy himself transported to France, or to some quiet village of Acadia, so faithfully were the peaceful rural scenes of these reproduced in the young Colony. Here the people led the same simple, pious lives, which evoked the admiration of the poet, and called forth from his pen the following tribute :

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers ;
Dwelt in the love of God and man. Alike were they free from
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of republics.
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows ;
But their dwellings were open as the day, and the hearts of the owners ;
There the richest were poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

CHAPTER V.

DESTITUTION OF THE COLONISTS.—REFUGEES OF 1755.—SECOND SIEGE OF LOUISBOURG.—DEPORTATION OF THE COLONISTS.

The population of our colony was steadily increasing. Immigrants were continually arriving from Nova Scotia, where the tyranny of the English Governor rendered the lives of the French inhabitants almost unbearable. The census of 1753 places the population at two thousand six hundred and sixty-three souls, the greater number of whom were settled near the centre, and not far from Port La Joie. Along the banks of the East River upwards of seven hundred resided. This increase of population had its disadvantages, for it seriously embarrassed the authorities, who were often in great straits to supply the necessaries of life to so many destitute persons. The immigrants from Nova Scotia were, in almost every instance, reduced to the most pitiable necessity. They arrived without food and with only scanty clothing, for their departure was so hurriedly effected, that they did not have time to make provision for the journey, much less for their sojourn in their new home. A number of families without a roof to shelter them, and without any means to supply their daily wants, was a serious menace to the welfare of the colony, and must have added greatly to the distress of their fellow-colonists.

Father Girard, writing from Point Prim, Oct. 24th, 1753, draws a rather gruesome picture of the poverty of these new-comers. He says : " Our refugees in general keep up good courage, and hope to be able

to support themselves by their labor ; but the want of clothing, which is almost general, is a great drawback, and will prevent many from working for the winter. They have no implements to work with, nor sufficient clothing to protect themselves by day or night. Many of the children are so scantily clad, that when I enter the house they flee for very shame. "All are not reduced to this extremity ; but almost all are in need, etc." The Government, however, came to their assistance, by distributing clothing and provisions amongst them ; but still much destitution and suffering prevailed, especially during the winter of 1753.

The year 1755 added greatly to their distress, on account of the expulsion of the Acadians from Nova Scotia. By this barbarous measure, one of the foulest blots on the pages of Canadian History, thousands of innocent men, women and children were torn from the homes their industry had reared, driven from the country they had learned to love and forced to seek refuge among strangers in foreign lands. Ships were stationed at the sea-board, into which the unfortunate people were driven by their cruel masters, to be carried away into exile. Amid the disorder of embarkation, however, a number escaped and hid themselves in the woods. Of these, some sought the protection of friendly Indian tribes, some made their way to Miramichi and Canada, others reached Louisbourg, whilst many crossed the Strait and came to St. John's Island. These unfortunate exiles arrived in the greatest destitution. Homeless, penniless, without food, and with scanty clothing, they came, seeking a roof to shelter them, a crust to dispel their hunger, a kind word to cheer and comfort them. Their countrymen in St. John's Island received them with every mark of kindness and affection. They threw open to them the doors of their humble cottages, shared with them their own scanty allowance of food, placed at their disposal remnants taken from depleted wardrobes, and did everything that charity could suggest and sacrifice accomplish, in order to make up the loss sustained in their expulsion from Nova Scotia. But the chalice of Acadian suffering was not yet emptied to the dregs. Tyranny had not yet exhausted all its energies ; and soon the refugees from Nova Scotia, and their

charitable friends in St. John's Island were involved in one common ruin.

Disputes, concerning the boundaries of the English and French possessions, were continually arising, and served to foment a spirit of jealousy and hatred between the two nations. Occasional conflicts occurred, and, though as yet there was no formal declaration of war between England and France, still we find them sending out, in 1756, troops and military stores to their respective colonies. Matters went on in this way till the spring of 1758, when the English, a second time, laid siege to Louisbourg. Forty-two warships, with twelve thousand men, in command of Admiral Boscawen, appeared before the city, which, after seven weeks of obstinate resistance, was forced to surrender.

The news of the attack on Louisbourg filled the people of St. John's Island with terror. They looked forward to the issue of the siege with mingled feelings of hope and fear. If the fortress could withstand the efforts of the invading army, the French could hold their own and the colonists would be safe; but if, on the other hand, it were forced to surrender, its fall would open the way for the conquest of the whole of Canada. While their anxiety was at its height, Father Maillard suddenly arrived. He was on his way from Cape Breton to Miramichi, and touched at Port La Joie to visit his countrymen, to whom he brought the news that Louisbourg had fallen.

Let our readers picture to themselves, if they are able, the grief and consternation which filled the minds of the poor people, when they learned that the fortress, on which they had built their hopes, had surrendered. Those who had been driven from Nova Scotia only three years before, were now face to face with new dangers; while those, who for years had lived in peace and security, felt that the time had come, when they, too, would have to drink of the bitter cup of exile. Father Maillard, in one of his letters to the Seminary of Quebec, thus speaks of their feelings: "The inhabitants of St. John's Island are all determined to remain on the Island, as they prefer doing so than go to die of hunger at Miramichi. Their priests remain with them. The Governor, M. De Villejoin, has placed the Island in

good condition; its fields are beautiful and the crops good. The English have not yet come here, though three weeks have elapsed since the fall of Louisbourg. The people await their coming in the hope of making some arrangement with them, or else they will flee to the woods if they are threatened with ill treatment; for they will not abandon the Island, where they would rather end their days, than go to die in misery at Miramichi." This letter of Father Maillard reveals the love of the Acadians for the land of their adoption. No other spot on earth could supplant it in their affections, and therefore, come what might, they were determined to remain on St. John's Island. Alas! they knew not what was in store for them. They could not foresee that the horrors of 1755 were soon to be renewed; and that St. John's Island was to share in the cruelties and barbarities which wrought the ruin of Acadia.

After the fall of Louisbourg, Boscawen dispatched Lord Rollo with a portion of the fleet to St. John's Island. His orders were to destroy all the property and drive out the inhabitants. On his arrival at Port La Joie, Lord Rollo notified Governor Villejoin of the disagreeable duty he had been sent to perform. The people immediately called a meeting, at which they prepared a memorial declaring their complete submission to the English King, and begging to be allowed to remain in peaceful possession of their homesteads. Lord Rollo, being only a subordinate officer, could not grant the prayer of the petition; but he suspended all hostile demonstrations, while Fathers Biscaret and Cassiet should go to Louisbourg to present the memorial to the Admiral in person. This latter proceeding was of no avail. Neither prayers nor entreaties had any effect. The odious edict must be carried out to the letter, and so the two priests returned to share in the ruin of their parishes. The Acadians of St. John's Island were treated as those of Nova Scotia. Deprived of their homes, there were driven to the seaside, and hurriedly crowded aboard ships to be conveyed from the country. The prows are turned to the deep. A cheerless ocean voyage amid the storms and cold of autumn confronts them. They steer their frail crafts for France, that beautiful Motherland, whose traditions they had learned at their fire-sides, but whose sunny shores

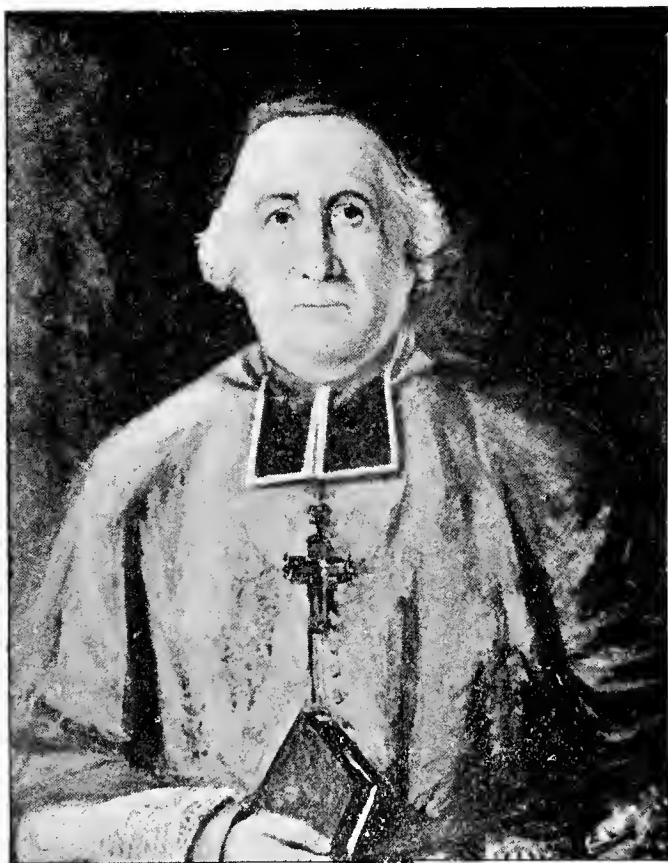
many of them were destined never to see. Standing on the decks, as the receding Island was gradually disappearing on the blue horizon, they could clearly descry the enemy's work of destruction. Lurid flames shot up high into the air from many an erstwhile happy homestead, and thick dark clouds of smoke, hovering over the land, told how complete was the ruin. The victors destroyed everything that fell into their hands. Of the four parishes, Port La Joie, Point Prim, St. Louis and St. Peter's, nothing remained. Being all within easy reach of the harbor, where the hostile ships were lying at anchor, they could not well escape the cruel designs of the invaders. Even the churches shared the common fate. They were burned to the ground, and only their smouldering ruins left to mark the place where they had stood.

Malpeque seems to have been more fortunate than the parishes nearer the centre. Its distance from Port La Joie proved a blessing to its people, by affording them sufficient time to consult their own safety, and frustrate, in some measure, the plans of the enemy. In a report sent to Louisbourg late in October, Lord Rollo states that the inhabitants of one of the parishes cannot be sent away before spring on account of their distance from the harbor, where the transports are assembled. He refers, without doubt, to Malpeque, the most western settlement of the Island, and the most distant from Port La Joie. The people, therefore, wisely took advantage of their position and the time it afforded them to depart by stealth rather than fall into the hands of the English. Their largest boats and two or three small schooners were assembled at the north shore where many embarked, and made their way to the mainland. It would seem from his report, that Lord Rollo was aware of this movement, but he did nothing to arrest its progress. In this way many made their escape among whom was Father Dosqué, who succeeded in reaching Quebec in safety, where he was afterwards appointed rector of the Cathedral, a position he filled till his death.

Father Girard sailed with a band of his parishioners, and after a long and stormy passage arrived in France where he died a few years later. Father Cassiet embarked with some of his flock, all of whom

experienced much inhuman treatment during the voyage across the ocean. He reached France, however, where he lived to extreme old age, and, at his death, was laid to rest in the pretty little cemetery of Montaut, his native village. Father Biscaret was never heard of again. In all probability he went down with the ship in which he sailed.

Thus ended the French occupation of St. John's Island. In 1759, Quebec surrendered to General Wolfe, and four years later was signed the Treaty of Paris, by which the whole of Canada became a colony of the British Crown.



RT. REV. J. O. BRIAND
Bishop of Quebec
1766 - 1794

CHAPTER VI.

STATE OF CANADIAN CHURCH AFTER THE CONQUEST.—THE CHURCH IN
ST. JOHN'S ISLAND.—PRIESTS IN THE MARITIME PROVINCES.—
ISLAND DIVIDED INTO LOTS.—POPULATION INCREASED.—
PASTORAL LETTER OF THE BISHOP OF QUEBEC.

The Conquest of Canada was fraught with sad consequences to the Church in the country. When the sceptre passed from the hand of France to that of England, with it passed away the rights and privileges the Church had hitherto enjoyed; and for many years she had to suffer persecution in the land discovered by herself, and whose virgin soil her missionaries had watered with their tears and their blood.

True it is, that the terms of capitulation guaranteed to the Catholics the free exercise of their religion; but this concession was hedged about with so many restrictions and modifications as to render it of little practical value.

Indeed, the British Government seemed to aim at nothing less than the total extinction of the Catholic Faith in the Colony, as may clearly be seen by the instructions issued to General Murray, first Governor of Canada after the Conquest.

He was told e. g. not to admit any ecclesiastical jurisdiction on the part of the See of Rome. He was to encourage the erection of Protestant schools, so that the establishment of the English Church might be more easily effected; in order, also, that the people might be gradually led to embrace the Protestant Religion, and have their

children brought up in its principles and tenets. An oath of abjuration, too, was exacted, which openly denied the jurisdiction of the Pope in spirituals, according to the teaching of the Anglican Church. These, and many other instructions were sent to General Murray, all more or less hostile to the Catholic Church ; but put forward, nevertheless, as in no wise infringing on the religious liberties of her members.

Acting up to the spirit that prompted these unjust measures, the British Government persistently opposed the appointment of a Bishop to the See of Quebec, rendered vacant by the death of Bishop Pontbriand, who worn out with excessive labours, heart-broken at the sight of so many miseries caused by the war, and his mind filled with the greatest anxiety regarding the future of the Church in Canada, passed away at Montreal within a year after the fall of Quebec.

For six years Canada remained without a bishop. Repeated efforts were made to secure an appointment to the vacant See ; but they were all rendered futile by the opposition of the Court of St. James. It was not till the year 1766 that Father Briand succeeded in obtaining permission to be raised to the episcopal dignity, and come to Canada, not however, with the title of Bishop of Quebec, but rather as a superintendent of Catholic interests within the Colony.

The state of affairs that greeted Bishop Briand on his arrival in Canada was not calculated to inspire him with courage. Besides the hostility he anticipated on the part of the civil authorities, he was pained to find the Canadian Church almost on the verge of ruin. The total Catholic population did not exceed eighty thousand souls, almost all of whom were reduced to the direst poverty by the war. To supply their spiritual wants he found only one hundred and forty priests, of whom many were no longer able to work on account of age and infirmity.

There was no prospect that the Bishop would be able to add to their number, at least for many years to come. There were no colleges wherein ecclesiastical students could be educated, as the Jesuit College of Quebec, the only institution of its kind in the Colony, had

long since closed its doors. The priests, who were wont to come from France, to labour in the Canadian Missions, were now looked upon with grave suspicion by the civil authorities, who obstinately refused to allow any more to enter the country. The Church in Canada, therefore, was in imminent danger of ruin, through want of priests to keep alive the sacred torch of divine faith.

From this hurried glance at the general condition of the Canadian Church, turn we now to our colony of St. John's Island.

In the foregoing chapter, we witnessed the barbarous expulsion of its inhabitants and the destruction of its churches. It is well to notice, however, that the invaders did not meet with complete success in the work of deportation. The love of the Acadians for the land of their adoption, second only to their love of Holy Church, caused them to cling with passionate devotion to their homes in St. John's Island. Hence on the arrival of the British soldiers, many of the people, especially in the west, evaded the watchfulness of the troops and fled to the woods, where they remained in hiding till the victors had departed. When they found all danger had passed away, they issued forth from their concealment, and returned with heavy hearts to rear new homes, amid the smouldering ruins that surrounded them. Soon they were joined by some families, who had escaped to the Mainland, and who now returned, rather than begin life anew in a strange land.

How changed their condition in a few years! What desolation is theirs! Their homes in ruin, their cattle destroyed, their farms laid waste, all their temporal possessions lost! Of five parishes nothing remains but the blackened ruins. The spire of the village church, bearing high the cross, is no longer to be seen; no blessed bell with its solemn music floods the ambient air; no more Sunday reunions, at which young and old meet in prayerful silence before the altar; no priest to offer spiritual consolation, and cheer their lonely exile with words of comfort and hope. In the whole of the Maritime Provinces, only one priest was permitted to remain, the Reverend Father Mail-
lard, of whom we had a word to say in a previous chapter. He had spent many years amongst the Indians; and by the sanctity of his life and devotedness to their welfare, had acquired a wonderful

ascendancy over them. This ascendancy the civil authorities prudently turned to their own advantage. Amid the difficulties of the time a man was necessary, whose influence could pacify the discontented red men and reconcile them to their new masters. Father Maillard was the man for the emergency. His word was law with the Indians, and his smallest command was submissively obeyed even by the proudest and most turbulent chief. He was, therefore, allowed to remain among the Indians of the Maritime Provinces, not through a spirit of toleration for the Church of which he was the representative, but because his presence would render good service to the Government.

After his death, in 1762, Father Bailly, of Quebec, succeeded him, and soon afterwards, Father De La Brosse, a Jesuit, was sent by the Bishop of Quebec to the Maritime Provinces. These missionaries had jurisdiction over St. John's Island; but we have no certainty that they were ever able to pay it a visit. From 1758 till 1772, it struggled on without a missionary, and without a ray of spiritual comfort to dispel the darkness of its isolation. Fourteen years thus passed in anxious expectation, a long night of gloom and sadness, cheered only by an occasional letter from the Bishop of Quebec, whose paternal heart went out in pity to this abandoned portion of his flock. On the 15th of July, 1776, less than two months after his arrival in Canada, Bishop Briand sent to them a pastoral letter filled with expressions of the most tender solicitude.

He begins by paying a just tribute to the fervor of their faith, deplores the fact that they have no priest amongst them, exhorts them to be loyal to the Crown of Great Britain, and concludes by promising to procure for them, if possible, the Reverend Father Girard, former Pastor of Point Prim.

In the meanwhile the English Government was actively engaged in devising ways and means for the settlement of St. John's Island. The matter having been submitted to the Board of Trade, in London, the following plan was adopted and carried out by the Crown. The Island was divided into sixty-seven lots or townships, which, with few exceptions, were granted, on certain conditions, to persons having claims against the Government. The conditions of the grants were :

That each proprietor should settle his lot or township, at the rate of one person to every two hundred acres within ten years from the date of the grant. The settlers were to be Protestants, in conformity with the colonial policy of England, and were to be taken from foreign countries so as not to drain the motherland of her military blood, and thereby weaken her power of defence. The applicants for the lots were so numerous as to be extremely embarrassing to the Government ; because the lands to be disposed of were so limited in extent, that not even a meagre pittance could be given to each applicant. To solve the difficulty, it was decided to dispose of the land by ballot, and accordingly, on July 8th, 1767, nearly the whole Island was set up at lottery and the holders of the lucky numbers became its proprietors. By the influx of Protestant immigrants resulting from this measure, as well as by the natural increase of the Acadians, the population of the Island had grown to about one thousand in the year 1769, when it was made a separate province, distinct from Nova Scotia, and it was honored in the following year by the arrival of Walter Patterson, Esq., its first English Governor.

In the same year, four Acadians of the Island having visited Quebec, Bishop Briand took advantage of their return to send another pastoral letter to this portion of his flock. "Your unhappy condition", writes His Lordship, "is a continual source of sorrow to us. We were edified to see four of your brethren perform their religious duties, and receive at our hands the Sacrament of Confirmation. What a happiness for us if we could go to you, and confer upon you the same spiritual benefits. I tried to procure for you a missionary from France, but being very poor, I had not the wherewithal to pay his expenses. Two years ago I sent a missionary to Acadia, in the hope that he would also go to visit you ; but I have since learned with great regret, that his efforts to reach you have been unsuccessful. This present year a Jesuit, the Reverend Father De La Brosse, was sent to the Maritime Provinces ; but the Governor of Quebec would not give him permission to exercise the ministry, without the consent of the Governor at Halifax. There are three measures, therefore, that I may here suggest to you, any one of which, if carried into effect,

will tend to ameliorate your present unsatisfactory condition. First : You may write to the Governor at Halifax, asking him to send to you the Reverend Father Bailly, or otherwise let some of you go there for him. Secondly : Failing in this, you can go to Bay des Chaleurs, where you will meet Father De La Brosse ; or if you prefer, obtain permission of the Governor at Halifax for Father De La Brosse to accompany you back to your homes. Thirdly : If neither of these plans prove feasible, I have the promise of a priest who will go to you, provided you come for him with a shallop or small schooner. He will remain with you for two months, to give instruction, supply the ceremonies of Baptism, rehabilitate marriages, etc. This last proceeding would be the most expensive ; but if the others fail, do not hesitate to adopt it, as your eternal salvation is above every other consideration. Many of your children have never assisted at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, never gone to confession, never had the happiness to receive the Bread of Life in Holy Communion, and consequently possess but little practical knowledge of their religion."

Having granted dispensations to all those who had entered the marriage state with an impediment of consanguinity, the Bishop lays down the rule : That in future marriages must be delayed until a priest visits them, which he hopes will occur once every year. He looks forward to their having a resident clergyman before long, who will probably be an Acadian, as there are four of that nationality now studying in France at the Bishop's expense. He exhorts parents to be watchful over their children, and to instruct them well in the duties of religion. He recommends great circumspection on the part of all, since without an opportunity of going to confession and communion, they are exposed to die without the sacraments.

This beautiful letter, revealing the paternal tenderness of the good Bishop, raised the drooping spirits of the Acadian people of St. John's Island, and filled their hearts with sentiments of love and gratitude. But when their first transports had passed away, the depth of their isolation and abandonment came home to their minds with greater intensity than ever. The immediate prospect held out to them was the casual visit of a missionary once a year. How small a consolation

was this, let every Catholic heart bear witness. Perhaps, before long, one of the Acadian students will be admitted to the priesthood, and then come to share his lot with them. But how many years must they wait ? How long is the gloom of their isolation to last ? Is its darkness never to be dispelled by a ray of God's Gospel permanently shining in their midst ? Good Acadian people, take courage. Your prayers are soon to be heard, the desires of your hearts fully realized. Soon a priest will come from across the seas, a noble scion transplanted from Scotia's rugged hills. He will come, an incarnation of heroism and devotedness, to work for you, to live with you and never to leave you until the Angel of God shall summon him to his eternal reward. Who he was, why he came, and when, will form the subject matter of the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

HIGHLAND EMIGRATION.—FATHER JAMES MACDONALD.—HIS LABORS AND DEATH.

The present chapter takes us back to the year 1746, when on the fatal field of Culloden, Charles Edward Stuart, the young Pretender, saw his hopes of gaining the English Throne shattered and lost forever. The years that followed were crucial times for the Church in Scotland. The Highlanders having eagerly espoused the cause of the ill-fated Prince, were marked out as objects of special hatred on the part of the House of Hanover, and for years priests and people were persecuted, imprisoned and tortured without mercy. Another grievance under which they labored was the cruel conduct of the petty landlords, especially in the Western Highlands and Islands adjacent. These tyrannical masters so harassed their poor tenants, as to make their lives almost unbearable. One of the most heartless of them was Alexander Macdonald of Boisdale, in the Island of Uist. At first a Catholic, he married a Protestant wife whose influence soon led him away from the faith of his fathers. Not content with thus having turned his back on the Church of his earlier years, he wished also to drag his tenantry with him. Their fidelity to the faith he had forsaken was for him a source of perpetual reproach; for very probably, down in the depths of his heart, there still glowed a tiny spark of sacred fire which interest and passion had failed to extinguish. Hence, with misguided zeal, he tried, by all means in his power, to force his tenants to imitate his cowardly perversion. He was known to have gone, staff in hand, and posted himself at the junction of two roads, in order to drive them like sheep to the Pro-

testant house of worship, a circumstance which caused his belief to be called by the tenants: "The Religion of the Yellow Staff." The better to succeed in his unhallowed work, he induced the Catholic parents to send their children to schools wherein instruction would be gratuitously given. Soon, however, they learned that this instruction was tinged with a decidedly Protestant hue, and in a great measure, directed against truths which every pious Catholic must hold dear: for which reason the parents immediately took their children away from the schools.

Things continued in this unsatisfactory condition until the year 1770, when the Laird of Boisdale made a last effort to bring about the perversion of his tenants. He notified them all to meet in a certain place, as he had something of importance to communicate to them. They immediately obeyed the command. Some went in great glee, hoping that having grown weary of persecution, he was now going to inaugurate a policy of justice and fair play; but the older and wiser heads shared not in these sentiments, and repaired with grave forebodings to the place of meeting. The sequel proved that the latter were right. No sooner had they all assembled, than a paper containing a renunciation of the Catholic faith and a sworn promise to avoid all intercourse with Catholic priests, was produced and read to them; and they were told to sign this infamous document under pain of being deprived of their lands and driven from their homes. Cruel alternative! On the one hand, they are asked to renounce their religion, to prove recreant to the solemn promises they had made in Baptism, to turn their backs forever on the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ that so often nourished their souls in Holy Communion; whilst on the other hand, poverty in its direst forms, hunger, destitution, exile and perhaps death itself—evils which appeal so strongly to the sensibilities of flesh and blood,—were held up to their contemplation. With courage worthy of the early martyrs, every man steadfastly refused to sign. Poverty with all its attending misery, exile with its flood of bitter recollections, death even, with all its concomitant horrors, might a thousand times stare them in the face; but no power ever given to man can rob them of the priceless gift of faith. Hence

they rejected with disdain the landlord's hard-hearted proposal, retired to their homes, and forthwith made up their minds to emigrate to America.

But where find means to defray the expenses of such a long voyage ? They were all poor. Years of high rent and unrequited labor had brought them to the verge of destitution. To find the money they needed, therefore, presented a series of difficulties almost insurmountable. Catholic faith and Catholic charity, however, were equal to the emergency. Captain John Macdonald, the Laird of Glenaladale and Glenfinnan, espoused their cause, and by indomitable energy and with great personal sacrifice, succeeded in devising means of emigration. This worthy man, who seems to have been the heart and soul of the movement, mortgaged his property in Scotland in order to raise the money to aid the needy emigrants, and to purchase an estate in St. John's Island upon which they might settle. At the same time, through the kind intervention of Bishop Hay, in Scotland, and Bishop Challoner, in London, private subscriptions were set on foot, and soon a considerable sum was raised to forward the project. Thus, amid alternate joy and sorrow, the work of preparation went steadily forward, till, about the 1st of May, 1772, two hundred and ten emigrants boarded the good ship *Alexander*, ready to set sail for the New World. After a prosperous voyage of about two months, during which no casualty worth mentioning occurred, the *Alexander* dropped anchor in Charlottetown Harbor on a beautiful morning towards the end of June. Here a short delay was made, during which the emigrants contemplated with pleasure the outlines of the beautiful country henceforth to be their home ; then, having again weighed anchor, they proceeded on their way up the East River, till they reached the lands purchased the preceding year by Captain Macdonald. Here they landed with all their earthly possessions at a place contiguous to the site of the old church of St. Louis, to which place they gave the name of Scotch Fort. The emigrants, of whom one hundred came from Uist Island and the remainder from the mainland of Scotland, were mostly Macdonalds. Among them, however, could be found a goodly sprinkling of Mackinnons, Macphees, Macraes, Gillises, Maceacherns, Mackenzies,

Macintoshes, and others, whose descendants constitute the Scotch Catholic population of Prince Edward Island at the present day.

The arrival of the Highlanders was a source of great joy to the Acadian settlers. They were naturally pleased to see the Catholic population assume greater proportions ; but more especially did they rejoice, that with the Highlanders, there had come, what they had so long and so earnestly desired, a priest, the Reverend James Macdonald, who in the prime and vigour of his manhood, had severed the ties that bound him to his Fatherland, rather than see his people deprived of spiritual succor in the land of their adoption.

This remarkable man, the first English-speaking priest who laboured on this Island, though now almost forgotten, is nevertheless worthy of having his name enshrined in the memory of all, who love virtue or admire sacrifice.

Born in 1736, he was consequently in his thirty-sixth year when he came to America. When nineteen years of age, he was sent to the Scots College in Rome, where he was ordained priest in 1765. Immediately after his ordination he returned to Scotland, and was stationed at Drummond, where he exercised the sacred ministry till 1772.

The Scotochronicon says of him : “ He was a pious and good missionary.”

On his arrival in St. John's Island, he wrote a letter to the Bishop of Quebec, which was to be carried thither by an Acadian, who, however, was not able to visit Quebec in that year. Accordingly, on the 9th of September, 1772, he writes another letter to His Lordship which he sends in care of a Mr. Cameron, one of his cousins. This letter, written in an easy style of Latin, is dated at Malpeque and acquaints the Bishop of his arrival on the Island. He asks for a renewal of the faculties which he had received from the Bishop in Scotland, mentions the fact that having studied in Rome, he is conversant with the Italian, French, Gaelic and English languages, and can, therefore, render spiritual assistance to all the Catholics living in this part of the diocese. He also asks the Bishop for a small altar-stone, as the one he has is rather large to carry about from place to place.

The receipt of this letter brought great joy to the Bishop of Quebec, who for years had been trying to obtain a priest for St. John's Island. He, therefore, sent an immediate answer to Father Macdonald, congratulating him on his safe arrival in the diocese, and giving him the most ample faculties to carry on missionary work among the Highlanders and Acadians.

This latter people numbered now about fifty families, and were settled principally in the vicinity of Malpeque. A few isolated families might be met with here and there, but the bulk of them lived to the westward not far from the site of their former parish. They had chosen this place, either because they believed themselves less exposed to danger in this remote locality, or because, on account of its distance from Port La Joie, it had suffered less than the other settlements during the invasion of 1758.

Having received spiritual charge of this people from the Bishop, Father James set out for Malpeque, and spent with them his first winter on St. John's Island. At the same time he directed the Scotch settlers to erect a suitable place of worship at Scotchfort. At his request, they went to work with right good will, and soon put up a church, which, though far below the present ideals of ecclesiastical architecture, was nevertheless, in the eyes of the early settlers, a marvel of beauty and design. It was a log building about thirty feet long, twenty feet wide, and about twelve feet in the post. Its roof could boast neither copper, nor slate, nor even the ordinary shingle; but bid proud defiance to wind and weather, under a modest covering of straw thatch. This church, dedicated to St. John, was situated over a mile west of the old French cemetery, on the farm of Donald MacRae, one of the Scottish emigrants.

For over thirty years it was used for divine service, until it had become so dilapidated that it was no longer fit for the purpose¹.

Early in the summer of 1773 Father James paid a visit to Quebec, where he was received with true paternal kindness by Bishop Briand.

1 — Its site is still pointed out between the Railway and the Hillsborough River, on land now held by the heirs of the late Angus Macdonald of Scotchfort.

There he met, also, the Reverend Father Dosqué, former pastor of Malpeque. We can easily imagine the latter's delight at meeting Father James and his eagerness to obtain some information of the place, from which he had escaped fifteen years before. Bishop Briand and Father Dosqué vied with each other in their kindness to Father James. Indeed all the clergy he met showed him every possible consideration during his stay. Holy men themselves, they readily recognised the heroic spirit of the man of God, and were not slow to appreciate him at his true worth. It is not surprising then, that on his return home, we find him writing to Quebec letters in which he pours forth his heartfelt thanks to the clergy whom he calls his friends and benefactors. Writing to Father Dosqué, he says that though he is only poorly provided against the rigors of the approaching winter still this gives him no anxiety, as his only concern is that he is so far from a priest in case of sickness. Having just spent a short time amongst the Clergy of Quebec, he feels the bitterness of his isolation more keenly than ever, now that he is returned to his own flock and he bemoans the sad circumstances that condemn him to his voluntary exile far from his brother priests. On September 28th, 1773, he writes to the Bishop of Quebec, that his health is good, but that he is in great dread of the winter, which he finds more severe than in Europe. He admits, however, that he is now better prepared for the cold than he was last winter, because he brought a stove from Quebec, by which he can make his room comfortable. In this same letter, he makes a statement which goes to show the spiritual destitution of the Acadians in the Maritime Provinces at that time. He says that a number of Acadian families, who had not had a priest among them for eleven years, had come all the way from New Brunswick, that they might approach the sacraments. They tried every means to induce Father James to go with them to the Mainland and become their parish priest; they used all manner of persuasion to obtain his consent, but he would not abandon his chosen flock. He promised, however, to pay them a visit the following year, should no priest come to them in the meanwhile.

Father James did not live to attain the allotted three score years

and ten. His zeal for the glory of God consumed his energies in a short time. Thirteen years of missionary toil in the wilds of St. John's Island, proved sufficient to undermine a constitution always delicate; and accordingly, in the height of his usefulness, when his presence would seem a necessity to his people, he died, as deeply regretted in death as he had been loved in life. The sad event occurred in 1785, when he had reached the age of forty-nine years. As he lay on his bed of death, his lonely condition must have come home to him with heartrending reality, for no priest was near to administer to him the sacraments of the dying. What he had foreseen with anxiety and fear, when writing to Father Dosqué, twelve years before, was now being only too fully realized. The last rites of Holy Church which he had so often conferred on others, were denied him in that supreme hour; and so he died without a priest to bless the clay, with which his mortal remains were soon to mingle or chant the Requiem when his soul was gone to meet its God.

The loving hands of his grief-stricken flock laid his body reverently to rest in the French cemetery at Scotchfort, where it has lain ever since in an obscure grave, unmarked save by a tree of spruce or fir, nature's protest against a people's forgetfulness. Strange ingratitude of man! A century has sufficed almost to erase the name of Father James from the traditions of a people for whom he preserved the sacred deposit of faith. His name is practically forgotten, whilst we reap in peace and contentment the bounteous harvest he sowed amid incredible privations. The descendants of those for whom he labored owe him a debt of gratitude for keeping alive the fire of divine faith amongst their ancestors, who in turn transmitted it bright and radiant to the present generation. Had Father James gone to the Mainland, when earnestly requested to do so, and when his own personal interests imperatively demanded it, the condition of the Catholics in St. John's Island would have grown intolerable, and in all probability they would have emigrated elsewhere. Their religion to them was dearer than life, its practices their only consolation, for be it remembered, that the early Scotch settlers, like the Acadians, were intensely devoted to their faith.

On this point the following testimony of an Australian writer is worth recording. "The extraordinary emigration of Scottish Catholics to Canada, and especially to Prince Edward Island, commenced long after Culloden, and was the result of that landlord policy in the west of Scotland, which has led to the crofter disturbances and others of our own times. The simple truth is that about twenty-five years after Culloden a vast number of Scottish Catholics from the Western Highlands were simply hounded out of Scotland, to suit the new ideas of the chiefs or the Southern landlords who had superseded the broken power of the old clan chiefs. These poor people mostly went to Prince Edward Island, now called the Garden of the magnificent Dominion of Canada, and if we can judge from the Catholic Directory of the Dominion and the statistics of the Island, these gallant Highlanders still cling in their new homes to the faith for which they suffered so much across the sea. Shoulder to shoulder, has been a watchword of the splendid Highland soldiers, who have made history and won victories for the British the world over, and the famous steadying order was first given to a regiment of Catholic Highlanders raised for King George III by a Catholic chieftain in the year 1778. The distance of the Western Ocean has not diminished the marvellous powers of Highland cohesion. Like the dispossessed of the martyr nation, Ireland, the Highland Catholics carry with them, wherever they go, the faith which is dearer to them even than the land of the 'Mountain and the flood'—the nurseland of the race of heroes to which they belong."

The death of Father James was a grievous blow to the Catholics of St. John's Island. Amongst the Acadians it revived the memory of the gloomy years that followed their expulsion, whilst for the Scotch it ushered in a state of things, of which till now they had had no experience:—to live deprived of the ministrations of a priest. It is true there were at this time a few missionaries on the Mainland, who occasionally visited the Island; but a casual visit of a priest, and that for a short time, was only scanty consolation for a people of such deeply religious sentiments.

Soon after Father James' death, Bishop Desglis, who in the previous

year had succeeded Bishop Briand, commissioned John Doucet, an Acadian of Rustico, to perform marriages and administer Baptism throughout the Island.

The following is a translation of the letter containing the commission :

“ Henry Francis Gragé, Vicar General of the Diocese of Quebec, to Mr. John Doucet, of Rustico, in St. John’s Island.

“ Seeing that your Island is deprived of a missionary since the death of Father Macdonald, your late Pastor, our desire to procure for you all spiritual advantages moves us to appoint you, John Doucet, and by these presents we appoint you in the name of His Lordship the Bishop of Quebec, to baptize, in every part of the Island, all children and adults presented to you, and to receive the consent of marriage of persons wishing to enter the conjugal state, provided there exists no impediment of consanguinity or affinity. These powers, however, shall continue only till you have another missionary, or have a visit from Father Bourg, our Vicar General, who may renew them if he sees fit to do so.” This document is dated at Quebec, Oct. 6th, 1785, and bears the signature of Father Gragé, Vicar General, and the countersignature of a young deacon named Plessis, who subsequently became Bishop of Quebec.

In the year 1787, Bishop Desglis sent a pastoral letter to the Catholics of the Maritime Provinces. Having paid a just tribute to their fervent faith, His Lordship goes on to say that he feels ever more and more the scarcity of priests. Though all the Catholic population, from Newfoundland to the Mississippi, look to him for spiritual succour, still even in the central and more populous localities there are many souls spiritually unprovided for. Addressing himself specially to his flock in St. John’s and Cape Breton Islands, he exhorts them to be faithful to the King ; as they cannot be good Christians nor true Catholics unless they are loyal subjects of his Majesty. In conclusion, he says : “ Love one another as Christ loved you. Let there be no divisions amongst you. Remember you have the same God, the same Faith, the same Sacraments, and you look forward to the same eternal inheritance.”

This was all the assistance that Quebec could offer to the people in St. John's Island. Five years thus passed during which the little Colony sighed and prayed for a missionary. Five years of hopeful, anxious waiting, till God in pity singled out one worthy to fill the place made vacant by the death of Father James.

It is Scotland that again hears the petition of the Colonists. A wail of spiritual desolation goes up from their hearts, it drowns the roaring of the Atlantic billows in its flight, and comes striking with God-given energy against the rugged hills of Scotland. A young priest, Reverend Angus Bernard MacEachern hears the echoes of that agonizing cry: his heart is touched with compassion, and bidding adieu to his native land he comes to the aid of his coreligionists.

Father MacEachern may justly be called the founder of Catholicity in this Island. The Gospel seed sown by the early French missionaries had grown into a sturdy tree, when the blasting storm of English invasion destroyed its wealth of foliage, and left it a bare and shattered trunk. It revived somewhat under the fostering care of Father James, and began to put forth new shoots, and strike its roots deeper into the soil. But his untimely death arrested its progress. It seemed again threatened with decay and death, for no husbandman was found to till the soil, whence it might derive nourishment.

But the work of Father MacEachern is never to know an interruption. When he lays down the staff of office his work shall be so firmly established that nothing can stop its upward and onward march. He shall leave behind him zealous priests to continue the good work, and they in turn shall be succeeded by others, who shall bring it to such a degree of development as to challenge our admiration at the present day.

CHAPTER VIII.

FATHER MACEACHERN'S BIRTH.—EARLY STUDIES.—AT ROYAL SCOTS COLLEGE.—ORDINATION.—RETURN TO SCOTLAND.—COMES TO ST. JOHN'S ISLAND.

Of the emigrants who came to St. John's Island in 1772, one of the most distinguished was Hugh (Ban) MacEachern, who with his wife and six children had crossed the ocean in search of a free home. Having been for many years gardener to the Laird of Kinloch in Scotland, Hugh Ban was in fairly easy circumstances, and consequently did not settle on the estate of Capt. Macdonald, but took up land in his own name, on the east side of Savage Harbor, where some of his descendants reside at the present day. Two of his children had remained in Scotland; Margaret, the eldest daughter who had been married a short time previous to the emigration, and Angus Bernard, the Benjamin of the family, whom they had left in care of Bishop Hugh Macdonald, Vicar Apostolic of the Highland District.

Angus Bernard was born at Kinloch Moidart, Scotland, on the 8th of February, 1759, and was consequently in his fourteenth year when his parents came to America. When but a little boy, he attracted the attention of Bishop Macdonald. His frank, open manner, his piety and intelligence pleased the observant Bishop, who recognised in these good dispositions the budding signs of a divine calling, and he besought the parents to leave him the boy, that he might be sent to college. To this they consented, not without regret, it is true, especially on the part of the mother, who loved her youngest child

with all the passionate tenderness of her maternal heart. To part from her darling boy, perhaps never to see him again on earth, was, indeed, a great trial, but with instinct almost prophetic, she realized that it was a sacrifice that would tend to the greater glory of God and to the salvation of innumerable souls ; and so she willingly accepted the cross, and stifled the promptings of motherhood, with that sublime faith which was so marked a trait in the character of the early colonists. Angus Bernard therefore remained in Scotland, and was sent to the Catholic college at Samlaman in the autumn of 1772.

Here he spent almost five years, devoting his time to the ordinary branches of a commercial education. When his primary studies were completed, his superiors felt that the fair promises of his early years gave forth new and more unmistakable signs of realization, and for that reason, they deemed the time had come when the young man should be placed in an institution of higher education, that the designs of Divine Providence might be carried out. With this intention, Angus Bernard set out for Spain and took up his classical studies in the Royal Scots College at Valladolid, in August, 1777.

The Royal Scots College belonged originally to the Jesuits, but came into possession of the Scottish Missions in the following manner. Colonel Semple, a Scottish gentleman, bequeathed to the bishop of his native country, a sum of money to found a seminary wherein priests could be educated for the Scotch Missions. As an institution of this kind could not be safely established in Scotland, at the time, owing to Protestant prejudice, the bishops were obliged to select a suitable location on the Continent. They made choice of Spain, and a college was, accordingly, built at Madrid, in the year 1663, and placed in charge of the Jesuits, who continued to be its directors till their suppression. On their expulsion from Spain, their property all reverted to the Crown. The Scottish bishops, however, claimed that the Government had no right to confiscate the College of Madrid, as it did not belong to the Jesuits, but was only administered by them in the name of the aforesaid bishops. The Spanish authorities readily saw the justice of this contention ; and in lieu of the College of Madrid,

already appropriated for civil purposes, they made over to the Scotch bishops the College of St. Ambrose founded by the Jesuits at Valladolid.

The College of St. Ambrose is famous in the history of the Jesuits. Here taught Suarez, the greatest theological light of the Society of Jesus. Here also, Rodriguez, the pious author of the admirable work on *Christian Perfection*, filled the chair of domestic casuistry. The college chapel, too, is not unknown to fame. In it a young and saintly Jesuit, Father Bernard de Hojos, was favoured with a miraculous vision of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who chose him to propagate the "Apostleship of Prayer" throughout the whole of Spain. In it, a short time after, was held the first public service celebrated in that kingdom in honor of the Sacred Heart, Father de Hojos being the celebrant. Some years later, it was again the scene of a magnificent demonstration, when the Spanish bishops assembled within its walls to take the preliminary steps towards the canonization of the same Father de Hojos.

In this institution, hallowed by so many sacred memories, Angus Bernard MacEachern entered on his higher studies. Having completed his classics, he took up the study of philosophy and theology in immediate preparation for the holy priesthood.

His relations with his fellow-students were always of the most cordial nature. His lighthearted disposition made him the most genial of companions, whilst his fervent faith and love of religion gave him special earnestness in the performance of his various duties. He was not what one would call a brilliant student : but he possessed a rich fund of sound, practical common sense which, joined to a scrupulous application to study, enabled him to hold a prominent place in all his classes. What particularly distinguished him was a love of manual labour. Nearly all his spare time was devoted to work of this kind. When the other students would be giving their hours of recreation to games of chance or skill, young MacEachern would be engaged in doing some work of practical use to the college.

At one time, with the aid of some other boys, he built a large boat, which, quite unknown to the builder, was destined to become historical.

The circumstances that brought it prominently before the public are the following.

The town of Valladolid is situated on the west bank of the river Pisuerga at its confluence with the Esgueva. This latter river flows through the town in two channels, before discharging its waters into the Pisuerga. This peculiar position of the town once gave rise to a disastrous flood, of which a memoir written in 1858 has this to say: "The spring of 1788 brought almost desolation to Valladolid, by a terrible inundation caused by the rising of the river Pisuerga. The Scotch students, having been successful in saving many of the inhabitants, were not only thanked for their services in a public document by the King, but their successors in the house still enjoy some little pecuniary token of the royal gratitude."

The "pecuniary token" here mentioned continues to be paid to this day. It consists of a small sum of money paid every month to the students by the Rector of the College. The payment is made on the authority of the King, who is Patron of the Institution, whence its name, Royal Scots College.

A history of Valladolid says the flood occurred on February 25th, 1788, and mentions among those who distinguished themselves in rescuing the inhabitants confined by the waters: the virtuous Reverend Alexander Cameron, Rector of the Scots College, who, attended by the Vice-Rector and Scotch students, carried on their shoulders an enormous boat, and putting it into the waters of the Esgueva, were the anchor of salvation to the inhabitants of the town."

In the church of St. Lawrence at Valladolid, a special service of thanksgiving is celebrated annually on the feast of St. Mathias, Apostle, to commemorate the preservation of the city from this flood; and mention is still made of the gallant services rendered by the Scotch students on that occasion. The Town Council assists in a body, and defrays all the expenses incidental to the religious function. The church of St. Lawrence was chosen for the ceremony, because in it is the statue of Our Blessed Lady, Patroness of Valladolid.

The "enormous boat" of which mention is made above, was the one built by Angus Bernard MacEachern, during his stay at the

Royal Scots College. It remained on the college grounds for many years, until appropriated by the Municipal Council, who feared it might be made use of to bring contraband goods into the town.

Young MacEachern spent ten years in Spain. On the 20th of August, 1787, he was raised to the priesthood by Bishop Moreno, of Valladolid. Having said his first mass in the college chapel, he bade adieu to companions and friends, and set out for his native land. Many changes had taken place in Scotland, since he had begun his studies. The friend and patron of his early years, Bishop Hugh Macdonald, had long since gone to his reward. His successor, Rt. Rev. John Macdonald, survived him only six years, his death having occurred on May 9th, 1779. To him succeeded the Rt. Rev. Alexander Macdonald, Titular Bishop of Polemo, who administered the spiritual affairs of the Highland District on Father MacEachern's return to Scotland.

The young priest, eager to take up the burden of missionary work, at once reported to the Bishop, and was assigned to a post of duty in the Western Highlands. Muck, Rum and Barra Islands were among the scenes of his early missionary labours; and here he worked with such signal success as to merit the favourable notice of the Bishop, who spoke of him as a "valuable young man."

His mind, however, was not at rest. Thoughts of his many friends in St. John's Island were ever present to him. His imagination was continually calling up sad pictures of their spiritual destitution since the lamented death of Father James. Letters, too, occasionally reached Scotland, containing pitiful accounts of the hardships endured by the colonists, and craving that a priest would come to cheer their lonely exile. The sad condition of his kinsmen beyond the seas deeply stirred the heart of Father MacEachern, and a desire to go to their relief took possession of his inmost being. This desire he nursed in silence for a long time, knowing full well that on account of the scarcity of priests, the Bishop could ill afford to dispense with his services in the Scotch missions. A favourable opportunity, however, unexpectedly occurred, of carrying out his long cherished design, an opportunity furnished by the unsettled state of the Highland Catholics during those years.

The condition of this people was indeed far from satisfactory. The untoward agencies which led to the emigration of 1772 still continued their nefarious work, though, perhaps, in a somewhat mitigated manner.

Landlordism and petty religious persecution never ceased to exercise their baneful influence, and everything that malice could suggest was done to discourage and degrade the poor Highlanders. Those stalwart descendants of a heroic race were ground down more and more by the pitiless exactions of greedy landowners, a domestic enemy more insidious in his tactics and generally more successful in his plans than the craftiest and strongest of foreign invaders. Years of patient suffering brought no redress. If they looked to the future it seemed almost hopeless; it lay overshadowed by a cloud of inky blackness whose only rift was emigration. What a sad alternative was this let every true patriot tell. We, who bask in the full sunshine of civil and religious liberty, cannot realize what it cost our forefathers to leave their homes in the Old World that they might rear free ones in the New. The words of the eloquent Dominican Father Burke speaking of the exiles of the sister Island well portray the feelings of these brave Highlanders, as they severed the ties that bound them to their native land.

“ The pleasure of standing on the soil of the land of our birth ; the pleasure of preserving every association that surrounded our boyhood and our youth ; the pleasure, sad and melancholy though it be, of watching every gray hair and wrinkle that time sends, even to those we love — these are among the keenest and best pleasures of which the heart of man is capable. Therefore it is, at all times, that to be exiled from his native land has been looked upon by man as a penalty and a grievance. This is true even of men whom nature has placed upon the most rugged and barren soil.”

True it was, also, of those Highland exiles, now forced to have their homes ; for though their native land was indeed “ a rugged and barren soil,” still they loved it with a devotion that made it dearer to them than the fairest Eden on earth.

Such was the unstable condition of the people during the missionary career of Father MacEachern in the Western Highlands. The

poorer classes, unable to defray the expenses of an ocean voyage, could only nurse their chronic discontent in silence and tears; but those who were better provided with means were quietly preparing for the journey, many denying themselves even the necessaries of life, that they might have the wherewithal to pay their passage to St. John's Island. Only one circumstance deterred them: the want of a priest and the consequent privation of the sacraments in the land of their adoption. They accordingly appealed to Father MacEachern. They told him that if they had a priest to accompany them, they would hesitate no longer. They implored him to have compassion on his needy countrymen and come to share their voluntary exile in the New World. This was the opportunity Father MacEachern had long looked for, and he was not slow in taking advantage of it. He went to Bishop Macdonald to lay the matter before him. He represented to him the abandoned state of the Scotch emigrants. He pleaded their cause with such pathos, that the Bishop finally yielded, and permitted him to go to the aid of his countrymen. The following letter from Bishop Macdonald to the Bishop of Quebec, dated at Samlaman, July 6th, 1790, shows the esteem the Bishop had for Father MacEachern, and with what reluctance he permitted him to leave the Scotch Missions. It also incidentally throws light on the spiritual abandonment of the inhabitants of St. John's Island:

“ My Lord,

Mr. Angus MacEachern will have the honor to deliver this letter to you, whom I take the liberty to recommend to your kind offices, as a deserving young clergyman full of zeal, piety, and for abilities both natural and acquired, equal to the due discharge of his respective functions. It is, considering my own situation, with the greatest reluctance I find myself obliged to part with a person of the above description. In the Island of St. John's there are upwards of six hundred of the Roman Catholic persuasion, half French, half emigrants, who went from these parts a long time ago. About seven years (?) past they had the misfortune to be deprived of the truly worthy churchman, who had accompanied the latter from Scotland; and have

since been without the assistance of a pastor, and have never ceased to make application and importune me for a clergyman. To the above entreaties were lately added the petitions, and I may say the insurmountable supplications of a very numerous emigration from these countries to said Island, so that I find myself unable to resist any longer, notwithstanding my difficulties at home for want of labourers, I am willing to believe that Your Lordship has been all along in the dark with regard to the distressed situation of the worthy Catholics in St. John's Island, otherwise you would have fallen upon some effectual plan, which in time coming must necessarily be the case.

Yours most respectfully,

† ALEX. MACDONALD.

To the Bishop of Quebec,

Samlaman, July 6, 1790."

Accompanying the above letter was a certificate of Father McEachern's ordination, and a copy of the faculties given to him by Bishop Macdonald. Having thus received the gracious permission of his Bishop, Father McEachern bade adieu to his native land and after a prosperous voyage arrived in St. John's Island in the month of August, 1790.



RT. REV. J. F. HUBERT
Bishop of Quebec
1788 - 1797

CHAPTER IX.

STATE OF THE COLONY IN 1790.—FATHER MACEACHERN APPLIES
FOR FACULTIES TO THE BISHOP OF QUEBEC.

Dreary, indeed, was the prospect that unfolded to the gaze of Father MacEachern, as he arrived in St. John's Island. It is true a warm welcome awaited him, for the loving mother, who had parted from him while he was yet a mere boy, was still living and yearning to clasp him again to her heart. His father too, freed from the restraint of petty landlordism, stood ready to extend to him the hospitality of the home he had succeeded in building up in the new country. Brothers and sisters also, displaying the marked changes wrought by eighteen years, were anxiously awaiting to greet him. The whole Catholic population in a word, so long deprived of a resident priest, welcomed him with exuberant joy, somewhat as the starving inhabitants of a beleagured city hail the victorious general who sets them free.

St. John's Island, at the time of which we write, was, in truth, widely different from what it is in our day. Could we turn back the wheels of time, so as to contemplate its appearance a century ago, we should stand confronted with a state of affairs, which the steady progress of intervening years has rendered well-nigh incredible. To compare the closing decade of the eighteenth century with the first of the twentieth, in any part of the civilized world, would unearth wonderful contrasts, and nowhere, perhaps, is this truth more strikingly verified than in our own favored Isle of St. John.

The social conveniences of our day were then utterly unknown. One would look in vain for the telegraph or the telephone. Railways and steamboats were still among the dreams of the future. The old lumbered-up stage-coach, doing slow and clumsy service in the Mother Country, had not yet begun its noisy traffic between the scattered settlements of the new Colony. Indeed, carriages of whatever kind would have been of little use, for roads there were none, except one leading from Charlottetown through Covehead, for a distance of about fifteen miles. This was the only highway worthy of the name in the whole Island. The roads made during the French occupation had disappeared through disuse ; they lay hidden under a vigorous growth of spruce and fir, now reaching almost to the height of the primeval forest. Travel therefore was always difficult, and not unfrequently accompanied by danger. On this subject Dr. McGregor, who visited the Island in 1791, says : “ In summer the easiest way of travelling was along shore, or along the edges of rivers. But this had its difficulties. The shore was encumbered with drift wood, or piled up with stones which, however interesting to a geologist, were very awkward for the pedestrian. In some places the tide rose so high that it was necessary to clamber up steep banks to get along. At other places the ground was soft and boggy, particularly at small creeks, which often rendered it necessary to make a long circuit to go round the head of them, and greatly increased the distance travelled.”

In pursuing his way, the traveller would often be obliged to cross these streams, and the means resorted to for this purpose were often quite ingenious. From the writer, quoted above, we learn, that where the water was not deep and the bottom hard, stilts were sometimes made use of by those who could steady themselves sufficiently to essay such a mode of crossing. When by their aid, the wayfarer had reached the opposite shore dryshod, he would lay down his stilts on the bank beyond the reach of the tide, where they remained, awaiting the first comer whose bodily equilibrium was such as to justify a trial of this perilous style of transit. Often-times a raft hastily constructed of drift wood, conveyed the traveller to the farther shore, thus saving him a wearisome journey inland in quest of a suitable fording-place.

A large tree, overturned by a storm, would occasionally fall across a stream, and afford the weary pedestrian an unexpected convenience. This however was not without its danger, for if he had not a steady head, he ran imminent risk of losing his balance, and falling from the narrow bridge into the water. In the spring time, when the ice was breaking up, the eager colonist would often leap on a cake of floating ice which, impelled by a pole, bore him in safety across the stream.

But the means of crossing, by far most in use, especially on the larger streams and rivers, was the canoe. Amongst the French and Indians it was very much employed. It was usually made of birch-bark taken from the trees in large sheets, then closely sewn together with fibrous roots or leathern thongs, and stretched on a framework of light timbers or ribs, which served to give shape, strength, and steadiness to the craft. The speed attained by a canoe, when impelled by the paddle of an expert, was truly marvellous. It was so light it scarcely seemed to touch the glassy surface of the water and moved in ready obedience to the slightest impulsion.

The Scottish emigrant did not, as a rule, make use of the bark canoe. He preferred the pirogue "or dug out", a narrow skiff made by hollowing the side of a log of spruce or fir, and which for crankness and unsteadiness out-rivaled the shell of the modern oarsman.

In the winter season, the routes of travel were less circuitous, but none the less tedious and perilous. The ice on the streams and along the seaboard was then the principal highway, and many were the difficulties it presented to the traveller as he journeyed from one settlement to the next. If a snowstorm arose his hardship increased, as the blinding drift would obscure the sun, efface every trace of the beaten path, and hide from sight all landmarks in the distance. The custom of bushing the ice had not yet been adopted, and the luckless traveller thus left without a guide, would often lose his way and wander hither and thither in search of shelter. In such emergencies presence of mind was very necessary and many wonderful escapes are recorded, due to having noted the course of the wind, when a storm was perceived to be impending. By this precaution, the traveller was able to tell the direction in which his way led, so that,

notwithstanding the blinding drift, he could direct his steps to a haven of safety.

While travelling through the woods, the colonist found his way by means of a blaze, or chip cut from the side of the trees at intervals along the route. This failing, his guide was a pocket compass, an instrument as common in those days, as are watches among the people at the present time. Times were, when the snow lay so deep, as to completely cover the blaze. This was a fruitful source of annoyance and even of danger to the traveller, who thus found himself without a guide in the trackless forest. Afraid to proceed farther, lest he lose his way, he would often retrace his steps, following his own footprints in the snow, and thus return ingloriously to the place whence he had set out.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty that met the traveller arose from the distance between the settlements. One would travel for miles without meeting a person with whom to exchange a word of greeting, or see a roof under which to seek shelter from cold or rain. At this time St. John's Island was only sparsely settled. The total population did not far exceed a thousand souls, and these were settled here and there, generally on the seacoast and along the banks of the largest rivers.

Shortly after the Conquest emigration set in and soon a considerable settlement was formed at Charlottetown. In 1771 a number of Scotch Protestants came to the Island, and took up land on the western shore of Richmond Bay. The following year saw the emigration of Highland Catholics, already referred to, and soon after settlements were formed at Georgetown, Covehead, St. Peter's and Cavendish. After the peace of 1784, the population was increased by the arrival of a band of Loyalists, who settled principally in the neighborhood of Bedeque. These, with the Acadians residing at Rustico, Malpeque and Fortune Bay, and a few Micmacs who roamed at will through the pathless forest, constituted the total population that greeted Father McEachern on his arrival in 1790.

Needless to say that the majority of the Catholic people were poor. The Acadians, despoiled of their property at the Conquest, had since

eked out only a bare subsistence, whilst the Highlanders driven in poverty from the Mother Country had scarcely bettered their condition in the land of their adoption. Industries were few and of a rude and primitive kind. Ship-building was carried on, in certain localities, and afforded employment to a few lumbermen and mechanics. Fishing, too, received some attention from those who were possessed of boats and gear to ply that calling. As in our day, however, agriculture was the chief industry, but so rude were the farming implements, and so primitive the mode of tillage, that the poor farmer made only a scant living amid untold hardship. Many were without cleared land, and their agricultural efforts were confined to hoeing in a patch of potatoes and grain amid the stumps that remained of the forest recently felled. A plough with a wooden mould-board, and a harrow with wooden pins were considered a desirable possession, while a rude cart with unshod wheels placed the fortunate owner in the front rank of agricultural progress. Threshing-mills were nowhere to be seen. In their stead the flail was universally used, and when the threshing was finished, the winds of heaven served to separate the chaff from the good grain. Grist-mills had not yet been introduced. Their place was filled by the quern or hand-mill, which converted the grain into flour at a sacrifice of much time and labor. These mills, long since gone out of use, are thus described by Dr. Johnson :—
“ The housewives grind their oats with a quern or hand-mill, which consists of two stones about a foot and a half in diameter. The lower is a little convex, to which the concavity of the upper must be fitted. In the middle of the upper stone is a round hole, and on one side is a long handle. The grinder sheds the corn gradually into the hole with one hand, and works the handle round with the other. The corn slides down the convexity of the lower stone, and by the motion of the upper is ground in its passage.”

Poor in worldly goods, the people were almost entirely destitute of educational facilities. Books were to be found with only a few. Newspapers received but scanty encouragement from a people, many of whom knew not how to read. Hence the first journalistic venture essayed in St. John's Island met with speedy failure. A newspaper

called the *St. John's Island Miscellany* was started early in 1790, but in less than two years it had to suspend publication, and over thirty years elapsed before a man came forward with sufficient courage to found its successor. Slight efforts, nevertheless, had been made to educate the younger generation. In some of the better settlements a log school-house with its seats of rough slabs, might be seen, in which the three *Rs*, commingled with a generous application of the birchen rod, constituted the entire curriculum. The school-master had no fixed residence. He usually went about from house to house, a week here and a week there, boarding with the parents to whose children he imparted the rudimentary education of the day. Books, slates and pencils were rare and difficult to procure, and not unfrequently a sheet of birch bark served the youthful aspirant in his efforts to acquire the art of calligraphy.

This backward state of the Colony was not confined to temporal things. Its spiritual interests too had been long neglected; for no priest was found to fill the place made vacant by the death of Father James. The broad field of religion lay untilled through want of a husbandman. The voice of sacrifice was hushed in the land. People died "unshriven and unhouseled," their only requiem the plaint of mourning friends, who thus found in their death a double bereavement. Marriages were contracted before a justice of the peace, or a minister of some Protestant denomination, and new-born infants received at the hands of laymen the sacrament of regeneration. Devotion necessarily languished, faith waxed cold, the cheerful spirit of religion gave way to sombre and settled melancholy. Priests, it is true, came over occasionally from the Mainland; but their stay would be necessarily short, and unfortunately there seems to have been no understanding between them, or no concerted action, and for this reason the people did not reap the full benefit of their ministrations.

The above outline of St. John's Island in 1790 will serve to give the reader an idea of the hardships and privations that confronted Father McEachern, as he entered on his missionary career in the Colony. It was a prospect indeed well calculated to fill with dismay the most intrepid follower of the Divine Master. But Father

MacEachern was cast in heroic mould. He had come to cultivate this forsaken part of the Lord's Vineyard, and strong in the promise "I am with you," he buckled on the armor of prayer and went forth cheerfully to do battle for God and Holy Church. As soon as he arrived, he sought an opportunity of communicating the fact to his new Superior, the Bishop of Quebec. As no regular mail-service existed in those days, it was with difficulty that a letter could be sent to any considerable distance. In fact, the writer would have to wait until some chance would occur, as when some person would be going the way who would carry the letter to its destination.

Whilst looking about for an opportunity of communicating with his Bishop, Father MacEachern learned that Capt. Joseph Gallant, an Acadian of Rustico, owned a small schooner in which he made occasional trips to Quebec, and that he contemplated going thither towards the middle of September.

Profiting by this occasion, Father MacEachern wrote to the Bishop of Quebec a letter dated September 7th, 1790, in which he informs His Lordship of his arrival in the Diocese, and asks for the faculties necessary to a priest entrusted with the spiritual charge of this remote region.

This letter remained some time unanswered. Three years previously Bishop Hubert had appointed Father Jones, of Halifax, Superior of the English missions in the Lower Provinces. To him all the clergy laboring in these missions were subject, and from him they had to receive the necessary approbation and jurisdiction. Of this arrangement Father MacEachern knew nothing, and for that reason had applied directly to the Bishop. His Lordship, accordingly, wrote to Father Jones bidding him examine Father MacEachern's credentials, and if found satisfactory, give him missionary faculties.

On the following day, Oct. 4th, he wrote to Father MacEachern. He told him to confer with Father Jones, who, on examining his papers, would be in a position to judge of his clerical standing. The reason for this precaution the Bishop assigns as follows:—"That in these countries far removed from the immediate supervision of the Bishop, some persons had passed themselves off for priests, without

being such in reality, and others, who were priests, had exercised the sacred ministry without authority. Consequently the Catholics of Nova Scotia and adjacent Islands had been instructed three years ago, to receive no French missionaries but those sent by the Bishop himself, and no English, Irish or Scotch priests but those having the approbation of Father Jones."

In the meantime, the news of Father MacEachern's arrival had reached Halifax, and Father Jones hastened to convey to him the faculties he required. At the same time, he wrote to the Bishop a long letter, which contained the following reference to the character and clerical standing of the new missionary. "I regard Father MacEachern as a very worthy priest. He is well acquainted with the customs, morals and language of his countrymen. He enjoys excellent health, and can do a great deal for the good of our Holy Religion. I have asked him to visit the poor Scotch of Pictou, Merigomiche and Miramichi next summer, instead of going to Quebec. There are Calvinist ministers in those places, who speak to the people in Erse. As none of our missionaries speak that language, the Scotch Catholics derive but little benefit from their visits. As Father MacEachern is full of zeal, and can preach in that tongue, we can hope a great measure of success from his labors in these missions."

The receipt of this letter dispelled all doubts on the part of Bishop Hubert. He rejoiced in the assurance that a priest, in every way worthy of his calling, had come to minister to the people of St. John's Island. He accordingly made no delay in writing to Father MacEachern, giving over the whole Island to his spiritual care, and bidding him bestow the consolations of his ministry upon all its Catholic population, Acadian as well as Scotch.

The above correspondence between the Bishop of Quebec, on the one hand, and Father Jones and Father MacEachern on the other, lets in a ray of light on a question, which a few years ago, gave rise to some acrimonious writing. In the "Memoirs of Bishop Burke," published in 1894, the Archbishop of Halifax makes the statement that the Quebec Bishops had neglected their Acadian subjects in the Lower Provinces, and that, if the Faith had been kept alive amongst

the latter, it was thanks to the "Sons of Erin mailed in the unshaken faith of their martyred ancestors." In support of this assertion the learned author dwells long and lovingly on the noble work done by Father Jones, to whose untiring energy he attributes the fact of so many priests having come to labor in these missions. Then follows a list of these missionaries of whom the first mentioned is Father MacEachern.

Some of the clergy of the Archdiocese of Quebec, having taken umbrage at the statements advanced by His Grace of Halifax, wrote a pamphlet by way of answer, in which they endeavor to prove that the conclusions reached by the illustrious Archbishop are not in accordance with the facts. Without entering here into the general merits of this controversy, we wish emphatically to state that we decline to follow either opinion in the case of Father MacEachern. His direct application for faculties to Bishop Hubert, proves that he was not aware of Father Jones' jurisdiction over these missions, and therefore could not have come hither at his request, whilst, on the other hand, the letters of the Bishop show that His Lordship was utterly unacquainted with Father MacEachern's coming and apparently unconscious of the causes that led up to it. His presence here, therefore, is due neither to the "Sons of Erin" nor to those of France. He came because, like his Master, "he had compassion on the multitude" who were starving for want of the Bread of divine truth. He came urged on by his own generous sympathy for a people long deprived of spiritual consolation. Following the example of the saintly Father James, whose memory still lingered among the people, like the sweet aroma of a tender blossom blasted by autumn's untimely frosts, Father MacEachern came to St. John's Island led on by the impulse of his own heart, to consecrate himself even until death to the spiritual care of this wild and inhospitable region.

CHAPTER X.

EARLY LABORS AND JOURNEYS.

As soon as Father MacEachern had received faculties from Father Jones, he entered on his missionary duties. Seeing no further reason for delay, he assembled the people in the old church at Scotchfort, and having offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, he preached in their native Gaelic the first sermon they had heard for years. Then, having visited all the people of the neighbourhood, he shouldered his missionary pack, and set out to convey the consolations of religion to the outlying settlements.

For some years he made his headquarters at Savage Harbor. This was the usual starting point of his apostolic journeys, and thither he returned, when wearied with his labors and travels. Early in the summer of 1791, he laid the foundation of a large stone house, on his father's farm, planned so as to serve the double purpose of residence and chapel. A brother-in-law, Robert MacInnis, who was an expert mason, had charge of the building, and with the generous help of the people it was speedily completed. It contained two principal divisions, of which one served as a residence for his father and mother, with whom he made his home, and the other he fitted up for a chapel, in which he said Mass and kept the Blessed Sacrament for about ten years. This chapel, the old church of St. John's at Scotchfort, and another tumbledown log-building at Malpeque were the only places of Catholic worship in the whole Island. Between Scotchfort and Savage Harbor he alternated on Sundays, except when his duties

called him to the other settlements. In this latter case, he carried with him everything required for the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, and officiated at a rude altar set up in the most commodious dwelling-house in the neighbourhood.

The difficulties he experienced in making these visits, especially during his early years in the Colony, may be gleaned from a letter written to the Bishop of Quebec, on May 1st, 1793. "There is only one large Missal in folio" he writes, "of a very old date in this Island, and as the place is so poor, that I cannot keep a servant and horse, I find it very burdensome to carry missal, vestments, altar-stone, and whatever other little necessities I want from one settlement to another, especially as I must go from station to station every other Sunday."

Difficulties like these, however, did not deter him in the least. Far from abating his zeal, they seemed to stimulate him to greater activity. He applied himself with all the ardor of an Academician, to perfect himself in the French language, in order that the Acadians might derive the fullest measure of benefit from his ministrations. He went amongst them as often as possible, and stayed with them as long as his duties to others would allow. Indeed the Scottish Catholics sometimes complained that, although he belonged by right to them, still often, when most needed, they would have to go in search of him to the Acadian settlements. A tradition long preserved among this latter people, relates that, in his desire to familiarize himself with their language, he would join the little children in their play, to accustom his ear to their accent and modes of expression. It must have been a novel sight for the old sedate Acadian people, to see the priest lay aside for the moment the reserve that usually distinguished him, and join with the children skating on the ponds or playing ball in the verdant fields; but it was a sight, at the same time, to rejoice the angels of God, who were able to divine and appreciate the hidden motives that actuated the missionary.

During his stay at Valladolid, he had acquired a fairly good knowledge of the language of France; but he could not then foresee, how children of that sunny clime, forsaken by their own in a foreign land,

would one day hang on his lips, as in broken accents he endeavored to convey to them the consolations of our Holy Religion. No wonder the Acadians, as well as the English speaking people, have cherished his memory ; for he was to both a true Apostle, a faithful representative of the Divine Master. No wonder that in two years after his arrival Father Jones, in a letter to the Bishop of Quebec, could say with truth : “ Father MacEachern is adored by his people.”

In winter his skates and his snowshoes were his constant companions, without which he would not undertake any extended journey. On his snowshoes and guided by the compass, he made his way through the forest, always choosing the direct route to save time and fatigue. In a few years he became so expert in this mode of travel, that few could keep up with him on a tramp. If a river rolled between him and his destination, and the ice was in good condition, he would exchange his snowshoes for his skates, and speed merrily on his way, tired nature rejoicing in a change of locomotion.

Later in life, when he was able to keep a horse, some of the difficulties that attended his earlier journeys were removed. He then went from place to place on horseback, but more frequently, if in summer, in a two-wheeled vehicle, known in its day as “ the yellow gig.” When the snow lay deep on the ground, the gig yielded its place to a sleigh of rude construction, whose peculiar appearance would, in all probability, excite the risibilities of the present aesthetic generation. It was a sort of mongrel contrivance, half boat and half sleigh, not marred by all the inconveniences of either, nor blessed with all the advantages of both. Its lower part was composed of runners and cross-bars like the ordinary sleigh. Upon this was placed a boat about eight feet in length, built with his own hands, which he fastened with light iron stays to the framework underneath. In this he placed his baggage, and having harnessed his horse to the composite conveyance, he was ready to travel whithersoever his duties called him. His special purpose in building this vehicle was to preserve his missionary outfit. As he travelled a great deal, and for the most part on bays, rivers, and along the sea-board, he was often in danger of getting into the ice, and of thus losing the portmanteau containing his vestments

and the other things required for saying mass. The loss of these would have placed him in a sorrowful plight, as they could not be replaced except from Quebec, and that meant a delay of months and perhaps of nearly a year. But thanks to the little boat, everything was quite safe. If the horse should happen to break through the ice, the boat would float on the surface of the water, and thus prevent his luggage from being lost or injured by the wet ¹.

About a century ago, this little boat was a familiar sight to the people of St. John's Island. Its arrival in a settlement created more excitement than would the sudden appearance of a hostile frigate in one of our seaports. As soon as it would be descried coming in the distance, word would be sent round that Father MacEachern had arrived, and forthwith all work would be suspended in the neighbourhood. Men and women, dressed in their holiday attire, soon crowded around him, every one eager to clasp the hand of their spiritual Father. Even the little children were brought, that they might receive the blessing of the man of God.

The impression his presence created in the minds of the children may be learned from an incident that occurred, when he was Bishop of Charlottetown. Being on a visit to Launching Place, King County, the people, as usual, came in crowds to receive the sacraments. Two boys, about five years of age, who had been left to keep house during the absence of their parents, thought that, they too, should go to confession. Confession meant to them probably no more than an interview with the Bishop. Accordingly, on their parents' return, they stole from the house, and hurriedly made their way to Angus Walker's, where the Bishop resided during his stay in the mission. When they reached the house the Bishop was still hearing confessions.

The two barefoot urchins demanded that they be admitted to his presence. Mrs. Walker kindly told them to return home and not trouble the holy man as he was very busy. They persisted. They had as much right to go to confession as some others whom they had met on the way. The Bishop hearing the friendly altercation

1 — This boat may still be seen at St. Joseph's Convent, Charlottetown.

laid aside his stole, and coming forward asked what was the matter. The two boys without hesitation laid their request before him in person. He smiled good-naturedly on the two lads, led them aside and spoke to them in the kindest manner, and having procured from Mrs. Walker a piece of bread and butter for each, bade them return as quickly as possible to their home.

They did so, feeling as happy and lighthearted as any penitent who, on that evening, had poured into the priest's ear a tale of sin and sorrow. This was one of his last visits to Launching, and the two boys never saw him again; but even in their old age, they loved to recall, as a pleasant youthful reminiscence, their first experience of the Sacrament of Penance, when Confession, that bugbear of timid souls, resolved itself into nothing more serious than a kind word and a piece of bread and butter.

Children were not the only objects of his love and solicitude. Young and old, alike, had easy access to him; and all were assured of a warmhearted reception.

To hold a station was for him no sinecure; for, from morning till night, he was the busiest of men. The difficulties of travel formed only a small part of the hardships that fell to his lot. From his arrival at a mission till his departure therefrom, he had scarcely a moment to himself. Business of every imaginable kind kept him continually employed. He was not only spiritual adviser, but lawyer, judge, physician and general peacemaker of the whole community. If a dispute had arisen between neighbours, the issue would usually lie open till the coming of the missionary. He would patiently listen to both sides of the story, and having duly considered the matter, would give a decision which, in every case, was considered final. When disturbances arose between individuals or in families, his visit was regarded as the most favourable occasion to bring about a reconciliation. In fact, a friendly settlement he made of absolute necessity, before such persons would be permitted to approach the Holy Table. Family troubles, too, the result of discord at the domestic hearth, were laid before him, and always with the confident assurance that he could apply an effectual remedy. A tradition still lingers among

the people of Cape Breton Island, that a woman of Whycogomagh once came to him, to complain that her husband was an inveterate fault finder, and a continual disturber of peace in the household. No matter what she might do to please him, he was never satisfied, and matters had recently grown so bad that she found it impossible to live with him. After she had poured out her tale of woe, and dwelt at length on her better half's chronic eccentricities, Father MacEachern, with apparent interest in her sad case, advised her to keep always at hand a bottle filled with salt and water, from which she was told to take a generous mouthful as soon as her husband began to scold, and as long as the domestic storm continued, she was to keep the salt and water in her mouth. This, of course, would prevent her taking an active part in the performance; and as it takes two to make a quarrel, the husband would have to suspend operations from sheer want of material to work on.

Father MacEachern was gifted with a rich fund of common sense. He also possessed an almost intuitive discernment of character, which, together with an abundant supply of ready wit, enabled him to find a satisfactory solution to difficulties which, in our day, demand the combined wisdom of judge and jury. On the other hand, the hold he had on the hearts of the people, the respect awakened by his life of earnest and saintly devotedness, the veneration entertained by all for his priestly character, gave him the most unquestioned authority in dealing with all matters submitted to his consideration. Moreover, he thoroughly understood the temperament of the people. He knew their faults as well as their good points, and whilst he was somewhat indulgent to their little weaknesses, he was the uncompromising enemy of every grave disorder.

The people of that day, especially the Scotch, were more or less given to gossip. Let not our readers strait at this assertion. When we consider the monotony of their lives, their complete isolation, the difficulties of communication and the scarcity of news from abroad, we will not be surprised to learn that they made the most of what news they had; and we will pardon them for this, all the more readily, when we reflect that the people of the present day, with all

their boasted enlightenment, have not entirely outgrown this weakness of their ancestors.

At the time of which we write, neither sex laid claim to a monopoly of this doubtful accomplishment. In our day it is generally supposed to thrive, only by the patronage of the gentler sex; but a century ago, all, without exception, offered incense at its shrine. Even Father MacEachern himself was not proof against its charming influence. He, too, was somewhat of a gossip — a charitable one, it is true, in whose keeping his neighbour's name and reputation were safe; but none more than he enjoyed a quiet friendly chat, especially with the older folks he met in the settlements.

The following incident of his missionary career, which we relate substantially as we heard it, will serve to illustrate this trait in his character. On a certain occasion he had travelled along the North Shore and around the East Point, whence he was slowly making his way to Three Rivers, when hunger and fatigue caused him to stop at a farmhouse near Little Harbor. After an exchange of greetings with the inmates, he told them that he had been a long time without food, and inquired if they had anything in the house to appease his hunger. The good housewife was only poorly prepared to entertain her visitor. Like all the Highlanders, this family was poor, and their larder rejoiced in nothing more toothsome than the ubiquitous potato. They had, however, a little wheat, and the quern was accordingly brought forth from its retreat, and the man of the house was soon engaged grinding flour for the priest's dinner. Whilst the grinding was being done, Father MacEachern entered on a species of desultory conversation, which soon drifted into a rehearsal of their personal experiences in Scotland. Among other things, the man related an amusing incident that had occurred in one of the missions of the Western Highlands, where Father MacEachern had been stationed before he came to St. John's Island; an incident in which the priest himself had played a prominent and rather comical part. Father MacEachern was surprised to hear the story, and exclaimed: "Why I did not think there was a soul on the Island had heard of that.—Indeed", came the answer; "I suppose you are not aware that So and so — naming some local

poet—made a song about it.—No”, replied the priest, “I was not aware of the fact, but I bet a pound if such a song was ever made, you know it; so now get to work and sing it for me.”

At this stage, the quern turned faster and faster, and no word was heard from the operator. “Come, come,” said the priest, “let us have the song.—But your own name occurs throughout it, in a dozen of places, was the answer.—All the better,” was the reply, “let us hear what it has to say about me.—But, Father,” rejoined the man now pushed to his wits’ end, “you will not get your dinner to-day if I stop to sing for you.—We will see about that,” said Father MacEachern, grasping the quern and beginning to grind with all his might. “Go on now with the song, and we will have the music and flour at the same time.” Further argument was useless. The old man had to comply and sang the song from end to end, not forgetting to emphasize the passages that had reference to the part played by the priest in the incident, which the poet had endeavored to immortalize. In this way Father MacEachern secured the confidence of the people, and gleaned many items of information, not always from motives of idle curiosity, but more frequently with the intention of spiritual profit to himself and others; and this course he pursued not merely on the occasion of a casual visit like the above; but also when he came to hold a station in a settlement. Hence, when the people gathered round, the first part of the proceedings was a friendly conversation and a spirited interchange of news. Now was a favourable opportunity of finding out if anything of a serious nature had occurred since his last visit to the neighbourhood, or anything that might demand special attention on his part; and this was done in so sly a manner, that the persons with whom he conversed were generally quite unconscious of the fact, that they imparted the very information he was most anxious to obtain.

After new acquaintances had been made, and old ones renewed, the more important work of the day began. Baptisms and marriages would take up some time, as also the blessing of beads, medals, and the few objects of piety obtainable in that day. Confessions then followed, and visits to the old and sick, who were too infirm to leave

their homes. On the following morning the people again assembled, and the labors of the preceding day were resumed. A temporary altar is put up in the most convenient place, and upon it is placed everything required for the celebration of the Holy Mysteries. Clad in his sacred vestments, the priest kneels at the foot of the rude altar, and recites in the language of his hearers, the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, a short abridgment of the Christian Doctrine, and appropriate prayers for the welfare of the King and Royal Family. This ended, he begins the Holy Sacrifice, at which all assist in a manner that recalls the privations of the primitive Christians in the Roman Catacombs. At the end of Mass, all approach the Holy Table to strengthen their souls by a fervent communion. A short instruction suitable to the wants of the community follows, in which the good priest never fails to impress on his hearers the advantages of a virtuous life.

It was now time to proceed to the next settlement, for other sheep there are, who anxiously await the coming of the shepherd. Father MacEachern accordingly packs up his portmanteau, and starts on his journey. The people follow him in crowds far on his way, disputing with each other, in holy emulation, the privilege of being the last to clasp his hand and receive his priestly blessing. On his arrival at the next settlement the same routine of labour awaits him, and thus from place to place he passed, like his Divine Master, "going about doing good," until wellnigh worn out with fatigue, he returned to his home at Savage Harbour.

CHAPTER XI.

SCARCITY OF PRIESTS.—FATHER MACEACHERN'S EXHORTATIONS.—
ST. ANDREW'S FARM PURCHASED.

One of the first and most urgent matters that appealed to the sympathies of Father MacEachern, on his arrival in St. John's Island, was the scarcity of priests, and the absence of adequate provision for the future of religion in the Colony.

For about thirty years the Acadians had been left without a priest of their own nationality, and lived on in a state of spiritual abandonment, that tended to keep alive the gloomy memories of their expulsion. Their lot was indeed a sad one; for after the lapse of so many years not a ray of spiritual light gilds their future, save one that gleams from the beacon fire of a stranger. Irish emigrants, too, were now arriving from Ireland and from Newfoundland. These took up their residence principally at Charlottetown, where they lived without priests and seemed destined to continue in a like condition for many years to come. Since the death of Father James, the Scottish colonists were similarly neglected, and how long they would have remained thus unprovided for is now a matter of idle speculation.

From the very first, Father MacEachern met with persons,—children of Catholic parents—who had grown up to manhood without having met a priest, much less approached the Sacraments. Examples of perversion, too, were occasionally to be found among the Irish and Scotch, sometimes in consequence of mixed marriages; but too often were they the results of the long and continual neglect to which the people were subjected. The sight of so many spiritual misfortunes

filled the tender heart of the missionary with sorrow. He deplored the fate of a people who, for conscience's sake, had fled from their Mother Country, but who in their new homes gradually grew cold and finally fell away, because no priest had been sent to preach to them the all saving word of God. These unfortunate circumstances caused Father MacEachern grave forebodings regarding the future of religion. He naturally felt how little could be done by one person, in a region so wild and extensive. Moreover, he foresaw that the hardships consequent to the spiritual care of the entire Island, multiplied by frequent visits to the Mainland, must necessarily tell heavily on his own health; and should sickness or disability come to him, who would step into his place, who would take up the tiresome burden, and keep alive the torch of divine Faith among these remote and deserted people? Hence, from the beginning he endeavoured to impress the authorities of Quebec with a sense of responsibility in this matter. Almost every letter he sends to the Bishop refers to the need of clergy, sometimes in words of humble earnest pleading, but not unfrequently in language that seems begotten of righteous indignation.

The Vicar Apostolic of the Highlands was fully aware of the great want of clergy in St. John's Island when he consented to Father MacEachern's departure from Scotland; but he charitably believed that the Diocesan authorities were not equally conversant with the same. Hence, in introducing Father MacEachern to the Bishop of Quebec, he says: "I am willing to believe that Your Lordship has been all along in the dark with regard to the distressed situation of the worthy Catholics in St. John's Island; otherwise you would have fallen upon some effectual plan, which, in time coming, must necessarily be the case."

These words contain a gentle reminder, that the Diocese of Quebec must in future provide itself with missionaries, and not look for aid to foreign countries, where even greater difficulties obtained than those which retarded the progress of the Church in Canada. And, indeed, it was not to be expected that Scotland could furnish clergy to Canada, when its own missions were not half supplied; and more

especially when, on account of the Reformation, there were no Catholic seminaries in the country, and aspirants to the priesthood were obliged to go abroad to be educated. Accordingly, in bidding adieu to Father MacEachern, on the eve of his departure from Scotland, the Vicar Apostolic of the Highlands advised him to proceed to Quebec, as soon as possible, and there confer with the Bishop regarding the education of worthy young men, who could be sent to labour on the missions of the Maritime Provinces.

Father MacEachern found it impossible to go to Quebec, as he had been requested by Bishop Macdonald. The amount of work that devolved upon him kept him so continually employed, that he could not spare the time required for the journey. He therefore laid the matter before the Bishop of Quebec, in a letter of August 28th, 1791, in a manner that left no doubt of its necessity. "As the Catholic emigrants here are all Highlanders", he writes, "and not altogether acquainted with any language but the Gaelic, I was advised by Bishop Macdonald to go to Quebec to see if anything could be done in order to educate some students in the Seminary of Quebec, acquainted with the Gaelic. Our missions in Scotland being very poor, and what foundations we have in Spain, France and Italy being scarcely sufficient to support a competent number for the immediate service of the Scotch missions, our Bishops look upon it as a hardship, to allow any of their number to accompany even the first settlers to these parts; and the circumstances of the Catholics here are so limited that they are not able to support a clergyman upon the Island and a student in the Seminary. But if Your Lordship could do anything towards supporting a young student, I will, if directed so, look out for a promising youth on the Island."

Some years later he again takes up the subject and writes to the Bishop in the following strain :

"Respecting these missions I foresee that religion will soon decay here, if something is not done within the Diocese to procure a succession and continuation of pastors for these wilds. I do not see any other resource but from the seminaries in Canada."

His appeals, nevertheless, remained a long time without effect.

Over twenty years elapsed before the first Islander entered the Quebec Seminary, and before the first Canadian priest came to share in the labours of these extensive missions.

It is true the Clergy of Canada were few in those days. In 1790, their entire number did not exceed one hundred and forty-six, of whom some had retired entirely from the ministry through age and infirmity, while others for similar reasons were unable to bear the strain of active parochial work. On the other hand, the Catholic population had grown to a hundred and fifty thousand souls, scattered over a territory that reached from Halifax as far west as Detroit. In the interior of the country the more populous centres were usually well provided for; but the outlying districts like St. John's Island were left to shift as best they could. Hence, in most instances, they were either without priests, or depending on the casual visit of some wandering missionary, whom chance or fancy might send their way.

To appeal for help to Quebec, in such circumstances, was unavailing. Father MacEachern saw at once that he must stand alone at least for some time: a conviction which, however discouraging, he accepted as unavoidable. But what would have been his feelings, had he been able to foresee the years of solitary labor in store for him, and the unsatisfactory condition of a people, left trusting so long to the unaided efforts of one priest?

Being only a humble missionary, subject to Diocesan authority, it lay not with him to inaugurate schemes, or adopt plans, with a view to providing clergy for these missions. But he did all that was possible for him to do in the matter. He pointed out to those in authority the pressing need of such provision being made for the future of religion, and tried to awaken in the people themselves a sense of responsibility, regarding the education of students for the holy priesthood.

This latter task required considerable exhortation; for if the authorities at Quebec seemed to take but little interest in the welfare of the Colony, the people themselves, who were the most interested, were equally remiss in providing for its future, and many a time Father MacEachern had occasion to complain of their apathy in this

regard. Thus, in one of his letters to Quebec, he writes : “ The people of this Island are anxious to obtain a place for one or two boys in the Seminary. But collections which must be made for such, amongst a people who were not used in the Old Country to provide either for clergymen’s education or maintenance, are attended with vexation and disappointment.”

Some allowance, however, must be made for the people. They were oppressed with poverty, and found it already a great hardship to procure for themselves and their families the necessaries of life. Moreover the Scottish emigrants had never been accustomed to contribute towards the support or education of clergy in Scotland. Tenants at will, for the most part, they had learned to look to the Landlord for all such expenses ; in return for which they rendered him a fealty bordering closely on slavery. Hence, however much they felt the need of clergy, or however deep was the uncertainty that enshrouded the future of religion in the colony, still they were loathe to adopt any measures for the support and education of priests, so long as such measures entailed expense on themselves. Accordingly, when the Bishop of Quebec assessed every communicant in the sum of one dollar a year, for the support of Father MacEachern, many of the people demurred, although the good priest had served them with little or no remuneration for nearly ten years.

The Acadians were not more generous in this respect. Under the French occupation, the Home Government defrayed all the expenses of religion, and since the Conquest they had no clergymen permanently living amongst them ; nor had they made any regular expenditure for the support of those who occasionally paid them a visit. In these circumstances it was an odious proceeding to impose an assessment on the people for such a purpose, and no matter how small the amount demanded, it was looked upon as a hardship.

Father MacEachern, however, was determined to succeed in the matter. In season and out of season he kept exhorting the people, and representing to them how much depended on their generosity. He shewed them clearly that unless they would educate priests for themselves, a day would come when they would have none amongst

them ; and then they need not turn to the Motherland, as in former years, for help in their spiritual extremity. Quebec had practically abandoned them for years ; Scotland, in future, would be unable to help them ; their only hope therefore lay in themselves ; and no time must be lost in taking steps to provide for the future. By his persistency, the people, at length, became convinced of the necessity of adopting some plan that would meet his views of the matter ; and a public meeting was convened at St. Andrew's to which were invited the people of Savage Harbour, Tracadie and Scotchfort, as well as the Acadians residing at Bay Fortune. The question of supporting the resident missionary was here considered, and also how best to provide a succession of clergy for the future needs of the people. As the bulk of the Catholic population lived east of Charlottetown, it was decided to divide this part of the Island into two parishes, which in course of time might have a clergyman each. One parish was to extend from what was then called Doctor's House on Lot 36 westward, as far as there were people who wished to be considered as belonging to it. The other beginning at the eastern line of Lot 36 would run eastward as far as there were inhabitants desirous of being included. The meeting then unanimously decided that a farm should be bought and paid for by assessing the families in each parish a certain fixed sum per annum ; and persons were appointed in each settlement to collect the several amounts, and hand in the same to a committee of management chosen at the general meeting. The reason assigned for this purchase was that the farm properly managed and worked by the people would yield a yearly revenue to the missionary which would prove a saving of ready cash to his hearers. It was hoped that when the plan should have matured, viz, when the farm had been paid for and a church and parochial house built on it, a school could be opened for the education of the youth of the parish. Then perhaps the missionary might be able to secure the services of one or two young men who would act as teachers, and who, if piously inclined, would study under his supervision, with a view of one day going abroad to be trained for the priesthood themselves.

With this end in view the committee empowered Father Mac-

Eachern to purchase a farm for the eastern parish. He made choice of a piece of land, containing two hundred acres, and lying on Lot 38, near the head of the Hillsborough River. It was owned by Mr. Burns of Stookley, who agreed to sell for the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds, one hundred pounds to be paid at the date of purchase, and the balance in equal instalments of fifty pounds at intervals of six months. The bargain was concluded and the first payment made on Oct. 6th, 1794. The farm had been occupied some time by a Mr. Douglas. It was in a good state of cultivation, and boasted one of the finest dwellings in the country as well as outbuildings in good repair. From this time it became known as the St. Andrew's farm, which was for many years the centre of civil and religious activity in the eastern portion of the Island.

Upon it stood the first cathedral of the Diocese of Charlottetown ; it was the site of the first Diocesan college, and—greatest honor of all,—it holds to-day in its embrace all that is mortal of him who made its history.

It seems the Acadians of Bay Fortune did not cheerfully take up with the plan adopted by the people for the support of the missionary. In fact they grew somewhat insolent when approached on the matter. They said that two hundred acres was too much land ; that a quarter of the same would be a sufficient for the purposes intended. They also contended that St. Andrew's was so far distant from their homes that it would be very difficult for them to attend Mass at that place, or go thither in search of a priest when his services would be required. Hence they wanted the church built as far east at least as St. Peter's, otherwise they would not contribute ; at the same time contending that Father MacEachern would be obliged to attend to their calls, whether they would contribute or not. This stand taken by the Acadians aroused the committee of management, and they instructed their chairman, Capt. John Macdonald of Glenaladale, to write them a letter recalling them to a sense of their duty. A few extracts from his letter will furnish curious reading. After explaining in detail the plan outlined above, he goes on to say : " Please to advert that to admit you to any share in our measure, is only a favour which charity

induces us to offer, but is in no other light an obligation on us. For more than twelve years after the reduction of this Island, neither yourselves nor your spiritual superiors in Canada had furnished a clergyman to you, and but for us, it is likely you would be in no better state to this day. Before we had departed our native country we had heard of your destitute case, and moreover, that all of you in the Island would settle with any who should bring to you a clergyman. We believe these two objects of relieving you, and your settling with us concurred in determining our leaders to prefer this Island to any other part of America. Had you, accordingly, thought proper to assimilate with us, after our arrival, we might probably ere now have been enabled to fall upon a plan of being more adequately provided with clergy, as well as with the means of schooling our children to their infinitely greater advantage; but you kept all along as before in a dispersed state, mostly in the remote parts of the Island, at the expense to us of losing our clergyman for more than three or four months yearly employed in serving you, during which some of ourselves have died, and have been subject to die without the usual rites, which was considered to be important to us."

Further on the writer says: "In respect to an entire farm being too much for him (Father MacEachern), you are mistaken if you suppose it to be his proposition. He had not ever a vote in it. He would probably prefer a more disengaging species of support or subsistence; but for the motive of our greater benefits it is our proposition to him conceiving it to be more economical to us, and tending to our further benefits which he is bound to follow on reasonable terms. Were the views of our own advantage out of the question and that the farm were only for his conveniency alone, we would scarcely admit you to call our liberality in question, and though we invited you to the general meeting, you did not think proper to attend it; you have no title to interfere with the resolutions out of doors. In respect to the church being at St. Peter's, we know of no place for it being to be had there, and if there were, we know not how far it might be agreeable to the Protestant inhabitants in that part. In aiming at an object of this nature, it is necessary to consult

the conveniency of the bulk of the people in question, and it were improper to sacrifice any more thereof, than is proposed above for your sake who are not permanently settled, but are in the practice of going off the Island, and of returning or shifting about as incidental impulses lead you. Upon the whole we request you will, without loss of time, announce to Mr. MacEachern, whether or not you will join, in order that otherwise we may provide seasonably for the part of the instalment of next May, which is projected to come from you."

What effects followed from this letter we cannot now accurately determine. Did it arouse the people to whom it was addressed to a sense of responsibility, or did they continue to keep aloof from the majority, we know not. It would now be, however, only a matter of idle speculation, for soon priests of their own tongue began to come to the Colony, and thenceforth, with the exception of a few years, the Acadians enjoyed the benefits of their ministrations.

CHAPTER XII

LABORS ON THE MAINLAND OF NOVA SCOTIA AND CAPE BRETON ISLAND.

The Gulf Shore of Nova Scotia, like the Island of St. John, had hitherto received but little attention from the authorities at Quebec. It, too, was without a resident pastor, though every year saw its population increase by the arrival of new bands of emigrants. By command of Father Jones, the care of these people also devolved on Father MacEachern. To save them from the dangers of perversion, the presence of a priest amongst them was absolutely necessary, and hence, Father MacEachern was ordered to go thither as soon as possible. Explaining this proceeding to the Bishop Father Jones says : " I have asked him (Father MacEachern), instead of going to Quebec, to visit next summer the poor Scotch of Pictou, Merigomiche and Miramichi. There are some Calvinist ministers in those places who speak to the people in Erse. None of our missionaries know that language and therefore the Catholic Scotch derive little fruit from their visits."

Accordingly Father MacEachern crossed over to the Mainland in the summer of 1791. He received a warm welcome from the people, many of whom had not seen a priest since they had left Scotland. Writing of this visit to the Bishop he says : " According to Mr. Jones' instructions I went to the Mainland about the latter end of May last, and I heard the confession of the few Catholics we have between Pictou and Miramichi ¹. There are about seventeen com-

1 — Evidently he means Merigomiche.

municants, almost all Highlanders, and I am sorry to inform you that from the want of a pastor, and by the importunities of a fanatical Dissenter of the Seceder faction, two or three have been perverted. I have not gone to Miramichi, as it lies at a great distance and no convenient conveyance has cast up."

In the autumn of 1791, two vessels arrived at Pictou bringing a large number of Catholic emigrants. Having no priest with them they began frequenting the Protestant church, and were in imminent danger of falling away from the faith had not Father MacEachern come to their rescue. The Rev. Dr MacGregor, the Presbyterian minister of Pictou, relates the circumstances as follows :

" Many of them (Catholic emigrants) came to hear sermon for a time, and there was a fair prospect that numbers of them would become Protestant Presbyterians ; but priest MacEachern in Prince Edward Island, hearing of their critical situation, paid them a visit, told them of the danger of living amongst Protestants, advised them to leave Pictou, to go eastward along the Gulf Shore to Cape Breton, where Protestants would not trouble them, and threatened them with excommunication if they would come to hear my preaching. A good number of them obeyed him instantly, and the rest by degrees, except a very few who embraced my gospel. In general they left off hearing and quitted their settlements in Pictou—and not a few of them with much reluctance."

Here we have a striking example of Father MacEachern's zeal for souls. Well it was for the early settlers and their descendants that such a sentinel stood on the watch-towers of Holy Church. Perpetual vigilance was his watchword, incessant work his guiding principle. Ever on the alert, he was ready to descry the enemy, even in the distance, and delayed not to warn his hearers of the dangers that menaced their faith. If a few unfortunately fell away, he laboured all the more strenuously to encourage the ones who remained faithful. " In journeyings often, in perils in the sea, in labour and painfulness, in much watchings," like his great prototype St. Paul, he confirmed his own in their faith and won many others to the blessed light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Hence, on May 1st, 1793, he was able to write to his Bishop : “ As to the state of religion here, I can only say that we receive some converts now and then, and that we have several under instruction ; that we have few or no public scandals, and that the people in general are pretty observant of their duties and submissive to lawful authority.”

Thus the good work went on notwithstanding the scarcity of priests, Father MacEachern multiplying his efforts for the spiritual welfare of the people. Like him “ who singly had maintained against revolted multitudes the cause of truth ”, he stood alone, his unaided arm holding aloft the banner of faith, “ the victory that overcometh the world.” As on a night in autumn, when the sky thickly overcast forebodes a storm, the moon is seen to peer through a rift in the clouds, shedding its silver beams to cheer the traveller’s lonely way ; so in the night of neglect and indifference that enshrouded the lives of the early colonists, Father MacEachern was the only light that shone athwart the darkness, dispelling the gloom with the lightsome rays of hope and promise.

In the year 1793, Reverend James Macdonald, a Scotch priest, came to Nova Scotia and took up his abode at Arisaig on the Gulf Shore. Father Jones gave him the necessary faculties, and gave him charge of all the Catholics living between Pictou and the Strait of Canso. His arrival was a welcome relief to Father MacEachern, who could now devote himself exclusively to his flock in St. John’s Island.

Unfortunately the relief was of short duration. The arduous duties of missionary life in a rigorous climate soon proved too trying for Father Macdonald’s delicate constitution, and in less than five years he fell a victim to his zeal for the salvation of souls. In the month of December, 1797, he had to make a journey of thirty miles to visit one of his parishioners who was lying dangerously ill. He started through the woods on foot, but had not proceeded far when night set in accompanied by a raging snowstorm. The heroic missionary would not return ; but continued his tedious tramp blinded with drift and benumbed with cold, and arrived at his destination in time to administer the last rites of Holy Church to his dying parishioner.

He then retraced his steps homeward, and reached Arisaig so tired by his exertions, and so overcome by exposure, that he was taken down with a raging fever from which he never fully recovered. As the fever abated, paralysis set in, which soon deprived him of the use of his hands. Father MacEachern went over to Arisaig, and had him brought over to St. John's Island, where he remained about two years, with very little signs of improvement. Gradually his mind gave way, and he became so troublesome that he was sent to the General Hospital of Quebec, where he died in February, 1807.

By his illness, the care of his mission reverted to Father MacEachern. No other priest was near; so he had to throw himself into the breach, although he was already overburdened with work. In a letter dated August 1st, 1798, he calls the attention of Bishop Denaut to the illness of Father James, and the consequent increase of duties that has devolved upon himself. "I have not only served all the Catholics of this Island, but was obliged to pass to the Mainland in the month of April last to visit the Rev. James Macdonald, who had been sick ever since the month of December, and as he was not in a condition to afford his flock any assistance, I found it necessary to wait on the Mainland until they approached to their Easter duties." After having given a description of Father James' illness and the causes that led to it, he continues: "His mission extended from the Rivers of Pictou to Antigonish, a distance along shore not short of seventy or eighty miles. There are about four hundred communicants in it. This additional charge having fallen upon me, it will be impossible for me to manage matters so as to give the faithful an opportunity of approaching the sacraments even once a year. But if you send a French priest, and that another whom we expect from Scotland should come, then Christian doctrine could be attended to regularly and the faithful would have it in their power to go to their spiritual duties as often as their devotion would require. But as things are now, neither one nor the other can be done."

The 17th of October, 1797, witnessed the death of Bishop Hubert, at the General Hospital, Quebec. He had been Bishop of Quebec for upwards of nine years, and in that capacity had welcomed Father

MacEachern to his Diocese. The deceased prelate, was succeeded by Mgr Denaut, whose first care was to select a Coadjutor according to a custom observed by his predecessors. His choice fell on his Vicar General, the Rev. Joseph Octave Plessis, a man of rare merit, and one of the greatest of the long line of illustrious bishops, who have adorned the venerable See of Quebec.

From the moment of his election, Bishop Plessis was for Father MacEachern, "a guide, philosopher and friend." Every plan tending to the spiritual improvement of the people found in him an ardent sympathizer. His ear was ever open to the wants and distresses of these remote missions, and if he did not always apply a remedy, it was owing to stress of circumstances and not to want of real interest. The number of letters that passed between him and Father MacEachern bear eloquent testimony to their mutual friendship, as well as to their zeal for the souls committed to their care.

One of the earliest of these letters is dated March 6th, 1799, and came in answer to Father MacEachern's statement regarding the illness of Father James Macdonald, as quoted above.

Bishop Plessis says that the news of Father James' illness has increased his own desire of paying a personal visit to Father MacEachern and his flock; and of procuring for them a French missionary to share with Father MacEachern in the work of the ministry. He says that he has made overtures to a friend in London, to secure the services of a priest for this purpose, who will meet the views of all interested persons.

Whilst anxiously awaiting the assistance thus kindly promised, Father MacEachern resumes the spiritual care of the people on the Mainland. Besides the annual visit made about Easter time, he frequently went over to visit the sick. He usually crossed the Strait in an open boat, landing sometimes at Pictou, but oftener at Arisaig, where a small church had been built some years previous. This was the usual starting-point of his missionary journeys on the Mainland, which, in most instances, were only tiresome repetitions of his many excursions in St. John's Island. For over five years this additional burden lay upon him, until relieved by the arrival at Arisaig of Rev. Alexander Macdonald in 1802.

The story of those years reads more like romance than history, so great were the hardships endured by the heroic missionary, and so manifold the labors that fell to his lot. Happily, there were not wanting intelligent and admiring eye-witnesses of his generous exertions, who bequeathed to the present generation the memory of his zeal and devotedness. From these sources we cull a few authentic incidents, which, we trust, may prove of interest to our readers, and at the same time furnish an insight into the life and labours of Father MacEachern.

Among the persons most intimately acquainted with him during those years, was a young man named Donald MacGillivray, who used to serve his Mass and accompany him on his journeys from place to place. The young lad seemed to have an inclination for the clerical state, and for that reason Father MacEachern took more than ordinary interest in him. To encourage him as much as possible he brought him over to his house at Savage Harbor, in order that he might apply himself to his books, under his patron's direction, and later on be sent to continue his studies in a foreign seminary. His early inclinations, however, passed away in his mature years, and after a year or more he returned to his early home in Nova Scotia, fully convinced that God had not called him to the priesthood.

More than half a century afterwards, MacGillivray, now an old man, evoked the echoes of the distant past, and wrote of his early patron and friend as follows: "I first saw Bishop Æneas MacEachern in 1797. He was paying his annual visit to the Gulf settlement, then consisting of a few scattered families, whose pastor, the Rev. James Macdonald, was unable from prolonged and severe illness to perform the work of the ministry. At that time I frequently served the illustrious Bishop's Mass, and subsequently, in June 1801, I accompanied him through the Gulf settlement around Cape Louis down to Antigonish, and thence to the western side of Cape Breton. I well remember the dreary roads we had to travel. A chip cut out of an occasional tree served as the only landmark to guide our weary steps through the dense forests of the then rugged country. A portmanteau containing a missal, vestments and the furniture of the altar, we carried

as best we could from one place to another, for the use of horses was as yet unknown to the few pioneers who composed the entire population of that part of His Majesty's dominions. I well remember to have seen a tent constructed of sheets with more than Indian ingenuity, in which Father Æneas celebrated Mass when visiting a sick woman, whose humble habitation did not afford room even to the few people that assembled to join in the service ¹."

Another of Father MacEachern's travelling companions was John Hanrahan, an Irish schoolmaster, who emigrated from Ireland to America during the rebellion of 1798. Having become a licensed teacher for the Province of Nova Scotia, he was engaged in that capacity at Pictou in the year 1800, and made in the spring of that year a memorable journey in company with Father MacEachern, of which he loved to speak in after years. Even in his old age, he retained a vivid impression of the various incidents of the journey, especially of the humour, wit, and marvellous powers of endurance displayed by his reverend companion. Their route lay chiefly through the forest and had to be made on snowshoes.

They left Pictou early on St. Patrick's Day, and at night-fall reached MacCara's Brook where they stayed over night with a Mr. James Peacock. Next morning they again bound on their snow-shoes and proceeded on their way to Cape George where they arrived late in the evening, and put up at the house of Mrs. Livingstone. The third day's tramp brought them to Tracadie where they spent the night. On the fourth morning they went aboard a large boat manned by two Frenchmen who kindly conveyed them to Judique, the terminus of their long and wearisome journey.

Judique was, at this time, a place of more than ordinary interest to Father MacEachern. It counted amongst its population his brother Ewen MacEachern and three married sisters; one, the wife of Robert MacInnis, mason, who, as we have said elsewhere, aided Father MacEachern in the erection of his stone house at Savage Harbor; the second, married to Michael Macdonald, a ship-owner and trader of

1 — From the *Antigonish Casket* (1856).

great repute in his day; and a third, Mrs. Allan Ban Macdonald, whose husband owned a large tract of land and devoted himself successfully to farming and fishing.

Father MacEachern's visits to Judique, therefore, partook largely of the nature of family reunions. They were a fruitful source of happiness to which he often looked forward with fond anticipations, amid the dreary round of missionary duties.

Oftentimes he would come quite unexpectedly. He loved to practise a pious deception, so as to surprise his sisters by stealing on them unawares. On these occasions he would walk suddenly into the house, without knocking or giving any other sign of his approach, to find them busy with their household duties and utterly unconscious of his proximity. In this way he arrived one morning before sunrise at the house of Robt. MacInnis, accompanied by his father and mother whom, though in their eightieth year, he had induced to make the journey with him. It argued remarkable courage in persons of their advanced age, to brave the waters of the Gulf in an open boat; but they went with fullest confidence, accompanied by Father MacEachern, the man of God, whose person, according to popular belief, was guarded with special care by Divine Providence. So great was their veneration for his sacred character that their simple faith clothed him with a mantle of supernatural protection, that rendered him proof against the dangers that so frequently beset his missionary career.

An incident that tended to confirm the people in this belief occurred at this time. On a certain day in early winter, Father MacEachern was making his way by boat towards a harbor on the eastern shore of St. John's Island. All day long a breeze had blown off shore, which in the afternoon freshened into a gale. The boat, unable to make head against the storm, was soon at the mercy of the waves, and driven farther and farther from the land. As the sun went down the gale increased in fury, and soon a night of inky blackness invested their perilous condition with new terrors. The two boatmen gave themselves up for lost. But Father MacEachern reassured them. He told them not to fear, for He who stilled the tempest would be their protector.

At his command they put the boat before the wind and after some hours they found themselves near land, where a sequestered nook afforded them a safe landing. Whilst his companions were securing the boat, Father MacEachern walked along the bank, eagerly peering through the darkness for some mark or sign by which he might recognise their whereabouts. It was customary for him when travelling along-shore, to select certain land marks as, v. g. a peculiarly shaped tree, a strange formation of coastline, a large rock or some striking object, and fix the same firmly in his memory, so that if stress of weather or any untoward circumstance brought him again within sight of it, he could tell at once his position without chart or compass. This prudent habit served him in good stead in the present instance, for soon he rejoined his companions and bidding them be of good cheer, told them that they had landed under the farm of John Chisholm, on the Gulf Shore; and as soon as they would have the boat secured, he would guide them to the house where they might rely on a true Highland welcome.

As they approached the house they were surprised to see a light shining from a window, for it was now long past midnight; and on knocking at the door it was immediately opened by Chisholm's son, who exclaimed: "Father Angus, God be praised! we were talking about you all this blessed night." Seated by a cheerful fire that speedily dispelled the wet and cold, the missionary learned a story that amply requited him for the hardship and exposure of the journey. Mr. Chisholm, now an old man, was in failing health since the summer. He gradually grew weaker and pined away, and his family began to apprehend that his death could not be far distant. When approached on the subject, however, Chisholm seemed to manifest no concern. He maintained that there was no need of alarm, as his condition did not justify any grave forebodings. As autumn advanced, the advisability of sending a boat to St. John's Island for Father MacEachern was duly discussed in the family; but as the sick man himself did not think such a proceeding necessary, they were loathe to press the matter too strongly.

In this way time passed until autumn had glided into winter;

and the idea of sending a boat across the Strait had perforce to be abandoned. At the same time, Chisholm's illness took a decided change for the worse: It was evident to all that his end was near, and his family were plunged in the deepest grief, that no priest could be found to administer the last sacraments. Bitterly did they now upbraid themselves, for not having insisted more firmly on the matter before it had grown too late. Of the whole household, the sick man alone was calm and unconcerned. Though he seemed lying at the point of death, he still insisted that he would yet recover; for God, in his mercy, would not let him die without the sacraments. In this way matters stood when Father MacEachern unexpectedly arrived on the scene. When Chisholm was informed that the priest was in the house, he could scarcely believe it. Nor did he appear thoroughly convinced until he saw the familiar form of Father Angus standing by his bedside. A beam of joy lighted up his wasted countenance, his eye dimmed by death's dark shadow, flashed forth the look of other years, and taking the priest's hand, he said: "I am going to die now, sure, but thank God, not without the sacraments. Living as I have been, all my lifetime, far from a priest, I have prayed every day that God would graciously grant me the assistance of one in my last illness; and I always felt convinced that He would not fail to grant my petition. My prayer is heard, the priest is here now, and I will die in peace." He received the last sacraments with extraordinary marks of devotion, and in a spirit of thankfulness for the mercy of God so singularly manifested towards him; and in the early morning, as the boat of Father MacEachern speeding homeward disappeared on the blue horizon, the venerable and faithful servant of God went to his eternal reward.

Another example of Father MacEachern's devotedness to the people of the Gulf Shore will close this Chapter. We borrow it from the pen of a writer whose sudden death, a few years ago, deprived the Diocese of Antigonish of a noble hearted priest, and the historical literature of Canada of a gifted and painstaking contributor. Our readers will enjoy his account in full:

"That monstrous misnomer, the *Aurora*, was an ex-Dutch man-

of-war. She landed her passengers (1802) on Pictou Island, and was put in quarantine on her arrival, as small-pox had broken out among them on the way across, resulting in much suffering, and sixty deaths and burials at sea. The horror and consternation this caused among the passengers may be more easily imagined than described. Enwombed for months in the Avernian hold of the old ship, herself often a helpless hulk, the plaything of winds and waves, scores of the sick men, women and children, huddled together, fevered and frenzied, burning with thirst, stifled with the foulness of the fell disease; the piteous plaints of children mingling with the groans and delirious agony of the dying; the deaths and the repulsive accompaniments of burials at sea, while mostly all who escaped the contagion were either in despair or worn out from sleeplessness and fatigue. Now would a sufferer imagine himself already landed in America, anon another is back again in Strathglass, tending the sheep, hunting the deer, or singing a snatch of some popular glee; while more touching still, yet another, perchance a mother, like Jessie of Lucknow, craving the consolations of religion, would suddenly sit up and welcome in by name some familiar and revered priest left at home, and wildly implore the sick to be still—to be of good cheer—that heavenly deliverance had come! It was amidst such heartrending scenes on board the *Aurora* now arrived and quarantined at Pictou Island, that there came to their ears, from a boat to windward, in the ever dear and thrilling accents of the Gaelic, the welcome words: ‘Christians, I am Father Angus MacEachern, from Prince Edward Island; I have been here a week awaiting you.’ Oh! how consoling were his words, all but as welcome as the blessed beams of God’s mercy to souls delivered from Purgatory. ‘Thanks, thanks be to God!’ surged up, in wave after wave, like the sound of mighty waters, from the depths of the ship, followed with shouts of blessings, greetings and thanksgivings. Just then a man was seen running out on the bow and hailing. It was Archibald Chisholm.

“Father Angus”, he exclaims, ‘I am the bearer of most cordial greetings to you from Bishop Chisholm of Lismore; he is well. Most welcome, most welcome; God be praised, we were together in Col-

lege' comes from the boat. Then follow more questions and answers between the ship and the boat. Father Augus, now moved to tears, implores them one and all to put their trust in God, and that all would be well. 'Meanwhile', he said, 'I'll go back and see the town-bailie and learn what I can do for you'. He started and returned with as little delay as possible, with the tidings that they were at liberty to land on the island. 'I have a place there where I am building my camp: make for the smoke'. Cheers of joy and gratitude followed this announcement. Boatload after boatload soon landed on the island, until there was not a passenger left on the *Aurora*. As fast as they could, they made for the 'smoke' and there met Father Augus half blinded with tears of sympathy and perspiration, putting up camps for their accommodation. Nevertheless smiling he says: 'Now all of you that are able, take a hold and help to build'; then, 'I am sure you have brought plenty good blankets from Strathglass to keep me as well as yourselves warm!' That indeed they did, for he soon saw that what he had merely said in a joke was carried out in right earnest by the good people; for they not only filled the inside, but literally covered the outside of his tent with their best and finest blankets, in spite of all his protestations. It goes without saying that the spiritual needs of the sick were zealously attended to; nay, that all were but too happy to avail themselves of the means so providentially vouchsafed them after the dangers of the voyage, to renew their allegiance to God..... The heroic missionary stayed over a month with his poor flock, until the very last of them was well and the quarantine over. Nor did his zeal end there. He advised them where to go, where they could get lands, and be free from all danger, spiritual and temporal¹."

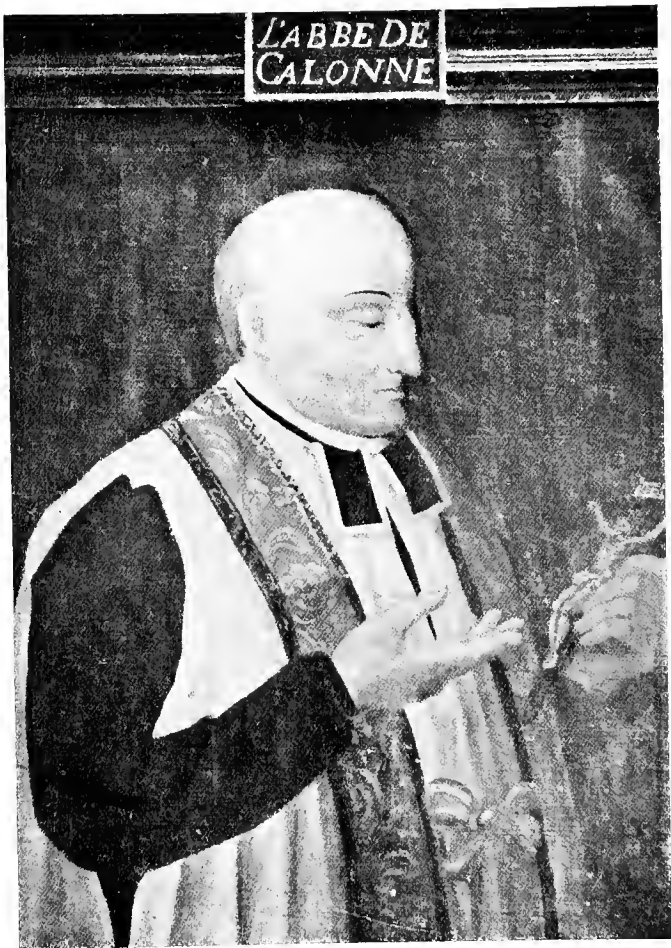
These are a few examples of Father MacEachern's labors during his early missionary career on the Mainland; examples, however, which show that heroism in the cause of Christ is not confined to the early ages of the Christian era; but that in every age and in every clime Holy Church is blessed with stalwart confessors, who are none the

1 — Rev. Ronald MacGillivray in the *Antigonish Casket*.

less deserving of our admiration and praise, if perchance their names grace not the catalogue of the canonized or the red-letter page of the martyr's beadroll.

And yet amid labors so varied and charity so heroic, Father MacEachern was the most humble of men. He took no credit to himself for labor performed or success achieved. Like the Apostle, he realized that whether he planted or watered it was God who gave the increase. Hence, in a letter written at Pictou to the Bishop of Quebec, he barely mentions his labors in behalf of the emigrants stricken with pestilence. At its close he simply says: "I am so hurried among the people, who were sickly with the smallpox, and who these ten days past have performed quarantine, that I cannot say to you at present anything else than assuring that with the most profound respect, I remain etc." Few words, these, in which to tell a story of such devotedness. Mere outlines are they of a magnificent picture. But the great Book of Life contains the story fully inscribed in characters of fiery gold; and the Divine Artist limned the picture in tints of unfading glory.

L'ABBE DE
CALONNE



REV. J. L. J. DE CALONNE

CHAPTER XIII.

FATHER DE CALONNE.—HE COMES TO CHARLOTTETOWN.—HIS IMPRESSIONS OF CHARLOTTETOWN.

The Rt. Rev. Joseph Octave Plessis, Coadjutor to the Bishop of Quebec, was, as we have already stated, a firm friend of Father MacEachern, and a close observer of the missionary's untiring efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ. The scarcity of priests in the Maritime Missions was for him a subject of great concern, and many an anxious hour did he spend vainly striving to devise ways and means of supplying pastors for this abandoned portion of his flock.

As none could be spared from the interior of the Diocese, he turned his thoughts to France, in the hope that this fruitful source from which the first clergy of Canada had been derived might again furnish the assistance he so much needed.

At this time there were many French priests living in London, whither they had fled to escape the horrors of the Revolution. There they remained for years in comparative idleness, anxiously awaiting the time when happier circumstances would permit of their return to their native land. Bishop Plessis, aware of this fact, entertained the hope that some of these exiled clergy could be induced to come to Canada, for it were better, thought he, that they should come to the Canadian missions, than that they should spend their time without aim or purpose, wandering about the streets of London.

The rule in those days was that the Bishop should consult the civil authorities before introducing any strange priests into the Provinces of Canada ; a rule, by the way, which is, in a great measure, responsible for the dearth of clergy during the years which we are now passing in review. Bishop Plessis therefore wrote a letter to General

Fanning, Governor of St. John's Island, acquainting him with his intention, and at the same time he wrote to Father MacEachern, bidding him pay a visit to the Governor in person, to ascertain if the introduction of foreign clergymen would meet with his approbation. His Excellency received Father MacEachern with his usual kindness. Long had he admired the devotedness of the faithful priest, and he expressed his pleasure on learning that negotiations were on foot to procure for him a companion who would share with him in the labors of his extensive mission. Hence, in answer to the Bishop's letter, Father MacEachern could say: "Yours of the 27th ultimo came to hand the 12th instant, and on the same day I waited on His Excellency Governor Fanning, who assured me in the most friendly manner that your sending a French emigrant priest to this Island would give him the greatest pleasure." Some months later, Mgr. Plessis, in reply to Father MacEachern, says: "I have already taken proper measures to get one (priest) from England by writing to a friend of mine in London, that he may choose a subject, such as will answer the views of Governor Fanning, and as will give to the faithful under your care the assistance they may expect from his zeal and ministry."

The "friend in London," referred to above, was the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon, who had charge of the funds subscribed for the maintenance of the exiled French Clergy. To him Bishop Plessis now applied for priests, but, for a time, without success.

The wilds of St. John's Island held out no inducement to clergymen brought up under the sunny skies of France. To brave the hardships of missionary life in this inhospitable region required courage such as is given to only a few; and it is not, therefore, surprising that priests accustomed to the comforts and conveniences of well organized parishes should quail at the prospect. Besides, they were now looking forward to a speedy return to their native land, and buoyed up by this hope, they preferred to remain in England whilst affairs in France were settling down to their normal condition.

There was one, however, who shared not in these hopes; one, to whom the future held out no promise of return; one, who, having

drunk to the dregs the chalice of his country's proscription, could look only to foreign lands for a home wherein he might end his days in peace. This was Reverend James Ladislas Joseph De Calonne, Vicar General of the Diocese of Cambrai, and brother of Charles Alexander De Calonne, Finance Minister of Louis XVI, during the crisis that preceded the Revolution.

Illustrious by his position in the Church, and remarkable for his unswerving loyalty to the Monarchy, Father De Calonne had no hope of ever returning to France. Hence, when his brother, the ex-minister, obtained from the English Government a grant of land on St. John's Island, it seemed to the exiled priest as if Providence called him there to spend the remainder of his days. The tract of land given to M. De Calonne was the Warren Farm lying at the entrance to Charlottetown Harbour, and containing the site of old Fort La Joie erected during the occupation of the Island by Count St. Pierre.

Thither Father De Calonne determined to come and at once wrote to the Bishop of Quebec a letter dated at London, February 5th, 1799, apprising His Lordship of his intention. From this letter we quote the following :

“ Having resolved, with the Government's consent, to take up my residence in St. John's Island; which forms part of your Diocese near Nova Scotia, together with a dozen of French emigrant priests of virtuous characters, and to bring with us about thirty Catholic laborers, I would not have presumed to set out on the journey without first having obtained your approval, if it were not that I must start in April in order to take advantage of the convoy, and also to profit by the kindness of the Government in my regard. I am confident then, my Lord, that you will not deem me too presumptuous in asking permission to erect a chapel on my property, as well as for myself and fellow-priests to say Mass and confess all those who may compose my little colony. I am well aware that to obtain a like permission I should be known to you ; but the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon has promised to recommend me to Your Lordship, as did also the Abbé Bourret, Superior of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, where I made my preparation for the priesthood. I am fifty-five

years of age. I am Vicar General and Official of the Diocese of Cambrai, which position I have filled for twenty years.

“ In going to St. John’s Island with a dozen priests whose sole care is their salvation, my intention is that we live together in community, reciting the divine office and performing our other spiritual exercises in common, singing High Mass and Vespers on Sundays and holydays and giving instruction to those who may assist thereat.”

After further details, he continues : “ May I entreat Your Lordship, should my project be pleasing to you, to send to St. John’s Island the spiritual faculties that you may see fit to bestow on us ; for we would be greatly embarrassed should we not receive them on our arrival, as our place of settlement is more than thirty miles from the Catholic chapel. ”

The original intention of Father De Calonne outlined above was never carried out in its entirety. Instead of twelve priests only one was found to accompany him to St. John’s Island, as is plain from the letter which, in conformity with his promise, the Bishop of St. Pol de Léon wrote from London to the Bishop of Quebec, and which contains particulars of Father De Calonne and his companion. “ I have the honor,” he wrote, “ to inform you that Rev. James Ladislas Joseph De Calonne, Vicar General and Official of the Diocese of Cambrai, is about setting out for St. John’s Island. Although his intention is to found a civil establishment, still he may render you good service in spiritual affairs. He is a man of much ability, varied talents, and virtuously inclined withal. With him goes another clergyman, named Amable Pichard, of the Diocese of Orleans, whose mediocre talents are offset by a humble and pious disposition. I take the liberty of recommending both to your kind consideration. I have given them faculties for the voyage, on their arrival they may apply to Your Lordship or your Vicar General ¹. ”

1 — In the controversy between the Archbishop of Halifax and certain priests of Quebec, of which mention was made elsewhere, the former places Father De Calonne’s name in the list of priests secured for the Maritime Province by Father Jones, while the latter claim that his coming is due to efforts put forth by the Bishop of Quebec. The letters of Father De Calonne justify neither one nor the other contention.

Father De Calonne and his companion touched at Halifax on their way to St. John's Island, and received a hearty welcome from Father Jones, Vicar General of Bishop Denaut. He had been apprised of their coming by a letter from the Bishop, who asked him to give them the faculties for which Father De Calonne had made application. Having heard of their arrival in St. John's Island, the Bishop hastens to send them a kindly word of greeting. He congratulates Father De Calonne on his safe arrival in the Diocese, and tells him that he will find in St. John's Island many opportunities of exercising his zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

In answer to His Lordship's letter of welcome, Father De Calonne writes a long and interesting letter dated May 28th, 1800, in which he says: "About three weeks ago, I received Your Lordship's letter of the 22nd October last. I thank you, My Lord, for the confidence with which you grant me such ample powers and I trust that I may always use the same, so as to merit no reproach on your part.

"The Catholics are scattered throughout the entire Island, a circumstance which renders the work of the ministry, more especially religious instruction, exceedingly difficult. They are divided into three classes: the French or Acadians, the Irish, and the Scotch. We can be most useful to the French, but they have the least need of our services. They live in three settlements: one on the North West called Malpeque, the second on the North known as Rustico, and a third on the East called Fortune Bay. These three places are a considerable distance apart, but the people are well grounded in their religion, faithful in the discharge of their duties, and grateful for the service rendered them. I have placed them in the charge of M. Pichard, who will spend four months of the year in each settlement.

"He has already done much good amongst them, and by God's blessing will yet accomplish more.

"The majority of the Scotch speak only the Celtique language. I cannot understand them, and am therefore of no service to them. Father MacEachern has charge of them. They are a good people holding their religion in great veneration.

"The town has fallen to my care, because I speak English. It is

made up principally of Irish and a few Scotch, the greater number soldiers, and all drunkards to an incredible excess, as well as supremely ignorant. All the religion they practise is to go to Mass on Sunday, and even on that point they are not scrupulous. Despite my efforts not more than five have made their Easter Duty this year. I preach to them regularly every Sunday, and teach Catechism after Mass; but now for two weeks they will not send their children. I have taught school twice a week all winter. I intend to do all I am able for them, but it is a field filled with thorns and briars, from which not much fruit can be expected unless by an extraordinary grace of God. I intend to pay special attention to the young people who furnish the only hope of the future.

“The abominable vice of drunkenness brutalizes the people and makes them indifferent to everything. In order to ingratiate myself with them, I ask no remuneration for my labors; only too happy would I be, did they respond to my efforts. They are attached to their faith. They would suffer death rather than abandon it, but they don’t observe even one of the Commandments. It would be easier, if I may so express myself, to make of them martyrs than Christians.”

The above description of Charlottetown is by no means a flattering one, but it tallies with the opinion of Dr. McGregor, who had paid it a visit nine years previous. “In a few minutes,” writes the Doctor, “I found Charlottetown to be wicked enough for a far larger place; swearing and drunkenness abounded.” And when he inquired why Rev. Mr. Desbrisay lived at Covehead rather than at Charlottetown, he was told: “It is a wicked place, and he is more retired and happy in the country.”

Though Father De Calonne was evidently astonished at the moral condition of the people whose care devolved upon him, still it need not excite surprise in those who are in the smallest degree familiar with the history of that time. Many of the Catholics who flocked to the Town were of the poorest and lowest class. Father De Calonne himself bears witness to this in one of his letters wherein he says: “The greater number of the Irish we have here bring with them nothing but vices, because they are the very dregs of Ireland and

Newfoundland. They came to this place not because they emigrate, but because they have been expelled from their own country."

Among such a class of people, it is not surprising that sin held high carnival, and that Father De Calonne's early efforts at reform met with poor success. He had to deal with persons most of whom had grown callous by long and continual association with crime, and for that reason could not be brought back to a life of virtue except by painstaking exhortation.

But there was another and a stronger reason why sin abounded amongst them, a reason that Father MacEachern had laboured, in season and out of season, to impress on the authorities at Quebec. It was the complete spiritual abandonment in which they were forced to live since their arrival in this country. During all this time they were without a priest to recall them to a sense of duty, and point out to them the way of God's law. No opportunity had they of assisting at Mass nor of approaching the sacraments, excepting on rare occasions, during these latter years, when Father MacEachern, stealing away from the importunities of the country settlements, would come out of sheer pity to pay them a transitory visit. Is it any wonder that virtue waned, and vice waxed strong in such circumstances? The wonder is that even a vestige of the true faith could have survived. And yet survive it did, as Father De Calonne assures us; for when he says "that it is easier to make of them martyrs than Christians," his words bear testimony to the constancy of that faith, the birthright of the Irish exile wheresoever he is found.

CHAPTER XIV.

THREE PRIESTS IN THE COLONY.—THEIR RESPECTIVE MISSIONS.—
BISHOP DENAUT ANNOUNCES HIS VISIT OF 1803.

The closing year of the 18th century found religious affairs better organized in St. John's Island than at any time since the Conquest. Three priests now shared the work that was formerly performed by one.

Father De Calonne was stationed at Charlottetown where he devoted himself unsparingly to the work of saving souls. He was now in his fifty-seventh year, and united in his person the ascetic bearing of the pious ecclesiastic with the genteel affability of the man of the world. His life had been one of varied experience. Courtier, priest, and exile, he had touched life in all its phases, so that his mature judgment could not fail to render valuable service to Church and State in the land of his adoption.

Father Pichard had charge of all the French missions. He made his home at Rustico; but spent a considerable part of his time at Malpeque and Fortune Bay, where the population was continually growing in numbers.

Father MacEachern continued in charge of the Scotch missions. His territory extended from Malpeque to East Point on this Island, and from Pictou, Nova Scotia, to Judique on Cape Breton Island. He still lived with his father and mother in the stone house at Savage Harbour; but his home comforts were few, for his missionary duties kept him continually on the road.

Early in this year a new name was given to the colony. Known from its earliest history as the Island of St. John, it now received the name of Prince Edward Island, in honor of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, Commander-in-chief of His Majesty's forces in British North America.

The Act of Parliament effecting the change received the Royal Assent on February 1st, 1799.

In the autumn of the following year, another priest, Reverend Gabriel Champion, arrived and spent the winter among the Acadians of Bay Fortune. In the following spring he was appointed by the Bishop of Quebec to the mission of Cheticamp, Cape Breton, whence he was to look after the people of Margaree and the Magdalen Islands.

Father De Calonne said Mass in his own house in Charlottetown. This fact we glean from a letter to Bishop Denaut, wherein he says : " Thus far I have always held service in my own house, wherein I have set up an altar in a room devoted exclusively to that purpose. Although this chapel has a large antechamber, they both are too small to accommodate the attendance. My people are so poor that it would be difficult for them to build a church, though building materials are cheap."

His Protestant friends kindly offered him the use of their church, so that his flock might be able to hear Mass in comfort, and he was disposed to profit by their generosity, but the Bishop would not allow it. As soon as His Lordship learned of the proposition, he wrote to him, saying : " You must not make use of Protestant churches for divine service. The like has never been done in this Diocese and might result in unpleasant consequences. It would be better to select for the purpose any other place, until such time as your flock can build a chapel for themselves."

In a short time Father De Calonne began to weary of his labors in Charlottetown. It seems his ministry gave him very little consolation ; and as a matter of course he laid the blame at the door of his flock. In his letters to the Bishop he continued to hold up to His Lordship's admiration the virtues of the Acadian people ; but never a word of praise could he find for those of his own flock. It is an old

saying : " blood is thicker than water, " and perchance the current that flowed in the good abbé's veins may have grown somewhat viscous, during the frosts of his first winter in Prince Edward Island. Be this as it may, we find Bishop Denaut saying to him in a letter of October 10th, 1800 :

" The Acadians continue to give you consolation, whilst the Irish continue in their indifference. This is your cross ; bear it well. If you cannot bear it, drag it."

This was undoubtedly excellent advice ; still Father De Calonne must have found that it entailed too great a sacrifice on his part ; for in a short time we find that he applies to the Bishop for a new mission. It seems he would prefer any place to Charlottetown. Even the Indians and the people of the Magdalen Islands would give him greater consolation than his present flock. He therefore writes to Bishop Plessis, on the first of June, 1801 : " As I meet with little success in this place, I propose, with permission of my superior, to learn the Indian language, old as I am, and if God should bless my efforts, I will look upon it as a sign that he has called me to live amongst them.....

" The Indian Missions, together with the Magdalen Islands, will give me work in proportion to my strength. I can get along well enough with the Indians, if I succeed in learning their language. I intend asking the Government to give them a small island called Lennox, situated in Malpeque Bay. Heretofore they have been driven from place to place, though they have unquestionably the best claim to the land. They are an excellent people, good Christians, who must have been instructed by a good missionary, if we are to judge by the results." In answer to the above, Bishop Plessis says : " Your plan regarding the Magdalen Islands, Malpeque, and the Indians, will certainly have the approval of your superiors. These Micmacs are probably the remnants of the people evangelized by Father Maillard, one of the most zealous missionaries that have labored in Canada." But what, we may well ask, was to become of the people of Charlottetown had this proposal been carried into effect ? Not a word of their future do we find in the correspondence above given. The

Acadians are pronounced excellent Christians, and the Indians, it seems, were not inferior to them ; and yet these are the ones who are to monopolize the care of the missionary, whilst the people of Charlottetown, said to be “ ignorant to a supreme degree, drunkards beyond the bounds of credibility ”, are to be abandoned to their own resources by the representatives of Him who said : “ They that are well have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the just but sinners to penance ”. Happily, however, this plan did not mature, and Father De Calonne continued a few years longer to labor in his first mission.

Besides attending to his flock in Charlottetown, he made occasional excursions to the Acadian Missions, especially to Malpeque, during his last years. Here he formed the acquaintance of Colonel Compton, the proprietor of lot 17, on which the Acadians of the mission were settled. This acquaintance soon ripened into friendship which, whilst a source of great happiness to the priest, proved of incalculable advantage to Mr. Compton and his family. While on their way to Prince Edward Island, they had as a fellow-passenger, the Reverend Mr. Boussin, afterwards a priest at the Seminary of Montreal. He became very much interested in the family and spent most of his leisure time in their company. His edifying conversation impressed them very deeply, and whilst it helped to dispel the monotony of the voyage, it opened their eyes to the light of truth. Before their journey was ended, many doubts had been cleared up, many prejudices dispelled, many opinions discarded, and a marvellous change had been effected in their views regarding the claims and position of the Catholic Church.

The good seed thus sown grew into an abundant harvest through the timely influence of Father De Calonne. The son and daughter together with the housekeeper made their profession of faith and were received into the Church. Mr. Compton himself intended to do likewise ; but unfortunately kept putting it off till a more favorable time. He held office under the Crown, and, on account of the rigor of the Penal Laws, he would be obliged to resign if he became a Catholic.

Worldly considerations, therefore, as too often happens, retarded

his conversion, and he continued for many years, at least outwardly, a member of the Protestant Church.

As time wore on Father De Calonne did not grow more contented with his lot nor more attached to his post of duty. With countless opportunities of procuring the glory of God, and surrounded by innumerable souls craving the Bread of Life, he never ceased to sigh for a place more congenial to his feelings. Many a time he wrote to London imploring some of the French Clergy to come to his assistance, and even tried to induce the Trappists to found a monastery on Prince Edward Island ; but none of these plans met with success.

In 1802 he wrote to Bishop Denaut, and must have asked to be relieved of his mission on Prince Edward Island and appointed to one at Quebec ; for, in September of that year, the Bishop sends him a letter in which he says : “ Come, I will pay all your expenses and we will arrange matters to your satisfaction when you arrive. As I see by your letter,” continues His Lordship, “ you cannot put your affairs in order before October. If the weather should be too stormy, I would not object to your spending the winter among the four or five families who have invited you to do so, and who offer to furnish all your necessaries. In this case you will come up with me next summer when I return from my pastoral visit to that region. I am going to write to the Superior of the Seminary to prepare a room for you so that you will have a place to go, should you come this autumn.” The way is now open. The invitation is clear and direct. Luckily, however, his departure is delayed, and for two years longer his flock is cheered and blessed by his ministrations.

Whilst Father De Calonne was thus laboring at his post in Charlottetown, Father Pichard was doing his utmost for the Acadian Missions. A small parochial house had been erected at Rustico, in which he made his home and to which he returned tired and footsore from his frequent missionary journeys. He was a modest, unassuming gentleman, devoted to his people and by them dearly beloved, discharging his manifold duties without display or ostentation. If his efforts were not crowned with the fullest measure of success, he did not lay all the blame at the door of his flock ; but rather redoubled

his labors in prayer and mortification to extend the Kingdom of Christ. Small churches had been built in his missions at Rustico, Malpeque and Tignish. They were generally log-buildings of the most unpretentious style of architecture; and, excepting the one at Malpeque, were entirely destitute of interior finish. Yet to the good Acadian people they were a "thing of beauty and a joy forever." To them they were sacred places, the home of sacrifice hallowed, like Bethlehem's Cave, by the visit of the Word made Flesh. Every Sunday the doors were thrown open to a throng of eager worshippers, who, even when no priest was near to offer the Holy Sacrifice, would assemble to unite their voices in prayer, and make the walls resound with canticles of praise and thanksgiving. Pious custom of a faithful people, kept up during years of spiritual abandonment until the dawn of a brighter era, when the mission grew into a parish and the casual visits of the missionary gave way to the permanent ministrations of a regular pastor!

Father MacEachern fitted up "Burns' House," on the St. Andrew's Farm, and converted it into a temporary chapel, as it was more convenient for the mass of the people than the chapel in the stone house at Savage Harbor. He also said Mass in the old church at Scotchfort, for the convenience of the people who resided at Tracadie. These two served as places of worship on alternate Sundays, when he happened to be at home, a circumstance, however, of rare occurrence. Another small chapel had been built by the settlers at Launching Place, in King's County, which, like those of the Acadian missions, boasted no furniture and no attempt at interior decoration. In fact, in the whole territory subject to Father MacEachern, there was only one chalice, two or three old torn missals, and a few vestments, worn almost to rags by being continually carried about from place to place.

Early in 1803, Father Augustine Macdonald, a brother of Capt. John Macdonald, of Tracadie, arrived in Prince Edward Island. He was well past the prime of life, having spent more than thirty years on the mission in Scotland. Failing health obliged him to give up the care of souls; so with an annuity granted by the Scottish Missions to

infirm priests, he retired from the active ministry and came to spend the evening of his days with his brother at Tracadie.

The year 1803 is rendered memorable in the history of the Church in Prince Edward Island, by a visit of Bishop Denaut, of Quebec. Although many years had elapsed since the light of faith first shone in the colony, no Bishop had yet come to bless it with his presence. No successor of the "chosen twelve" had appeared among the people to cheer and comfort them with apostolic ministrations. The year 1803 then marks an epoch in its history, for it brought to its shores the Rt. Rev. Bishop Denaut, who, amid difficulties wellnigh incredible, made his way from Quebec to visit this remote portion of his flock.

A journey from Quebec to Charlottetown was a serious undertaking in 1803. It was attended by fatigues and dangers, entirely unknown in our days of rapid transit. Facilities for travel were very rare a century ago; so rare, indeed, that one would have to wait generally for weeks, and frequently for months to secure a passage by land or sea.

Such was Bishop Denaut's experience on the present occasion. It had been his intention to come to Prince Edward Island in the spring of 1802, and he had sent a pastoral letter announcing the fact to the faithful; but he was obliged to postpone his visit, because he could not secure a passage until the season was too far advanced. Accordingly, he sent a second letter, giving the reason why he had been obliged to delay his coming for a year. In this letter written on the 11th of June, 1802, he says: "Our intention was to embark on the first vessel that might set sail for one of your ports, but Divine Providence has decreed otherwise. No vessel hailing from those ports has yet called at Quebec, and in any case the constant head winds would have prevented our sailing.

"For these reasons, and as the season is growing late, we have decided to put off our visit until next year," etc.



RT. REV. P. DENAUT
Bishop of Quebec
1797 - 1806

CHAPTER XV.

FIRST VISIT OF A BISHOP TO PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

The Bishop of Quebec could not come to Prince Edward Island in 1802. The impossibility of securing a suitable conveyance was, of course, the principal obstacle, but there were other difficulties as well : such as the danger of being detained too long away from the centre of the Diocese, and the inability of speedily returning should any unexpected contingency demand his presence at home. These and kindred considerations stood in the way, and deprived the Bishop of the happiness he anticipated from arduous duty well performed, and the people of the blessings they had hoped to reap from his episcopal ministrations. The visit, however, was only postponed. The hardships inseparable from the journey, instead of proving a hindrance, were rather a stimulus to the prelate's zeal for the spiritual welfare of his distant flock, and served to whet to a keen edge the desire with which he looked forward to the time when he might pay them a visit in person.

Though he failed, therefore, in his first attempt, the design was by no means abandoned. It was merely left in abeyance until the advent of a more favorable opportunity. It was vain to seek a direct passage to the Gulf, as no vessels happened to come hither just at that time ; so the Bishop was forced to choose a roundabout way, the length and difficulties of which are indisputable proofs of his manly courage and apostolic zeal.

Accompanied by his secretary, Father Lartigue, he left his home at Longueuil, near Montreal, on the 3rd of May, 1803, and after having visited a few parishes, proceeded by way of Burlington to Boston. Here he took passage by sea, and after a prosperous voyage landed in Nova Scotia, near the mission of St. Anne de Tousquet, on Friday, the 27th of May. Being now within the limits of his own Diocese, he resumed the functions of his pastoral visit and travelled the country from Cape Sable almost to the Strait of Canso, spending a few days in each mission as he went along. From Nova Scotia he came over to Prince Edward Island. How and when he crossed the Strait we cannot accurately determine; but from his diary we learn that he was at Pomquette in Nova Scotia on the 3rd of August, and on the 15th of the same month, we find him in Charlottetown, the scene of his first apostolic labours in Prince Edward Island. Here he was welcomed by Father De Calonne, who for four years had been in charge of this mission, and who, all the while, had omitted no opportunity of creating in the Bishop's mind an unfavorable opinion regarding his people. Whether influenced by the Abbé's letters or by information obtained on the spot, the Bishop says in his diary that he found the people too poor to bear the burden of a priest's support, and for this reason the persistent importunity of Father De Calonne is rewarded by his removal from Charlottetown and his appointment to an Acadian Mission. In 1803 the total number of Catholics in Charlottetown was only three hundred and forty-eight, of whom ninety-one were communicants, and seventy-five received the sacrament of Confirmation. They had neither church, parochial house nor any of the requisites for the service of the altar.

From Charlottetown, Bishop Denaut proceeded to Tracadie and St. Andrew's. These missions were very little in advance of Charlottetown in the external appointments of religious worship. The old church of St. John had evidently outlived its usefulness, for the Bishop found it in so dilapidated a condition, that he absolutely refused to say Mass in it. At the same time he chose a site for a new church at St. Andrew's, and directed Father MacEachern to lose no time in procuring materials for the building. To guide both the priest

and people in this undertaking, as well as in some other matters affecting the spiritual welfare of the mission; he issued the following Pastoral Letter :

“ Peter Denaut, Bishop of Quebec, etc., etc.

“ In view of the want existing in this mission of a chapel situated in a central place, for the convenience of the people in the different settlements of the mission, We ordain the following :

“ 1. That all the Catholics of St. Andrew's, Naufrage, Tracadie, Three Rivers, Fortune and East Point, shall unite to build at St. Andrew's, near the presbytery already constructed, a chapel sixty feet long by thirty-six wide, boarded within and without, with a sacristy eighteen feet by twenty, and they shall fence in a cemetery a half acre in size near to the same.

“ 2. They shall also furnish the said chapel with vestments, sacred vessels and linen required for the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, according to a list subjoined to the present letter.

“ 3. Pews shall be placed in the chapel for the accommodation of the people who may wish to rent them, and they shall be put up to auction at the church door and assigned to the highest bidder for an annual rent which shall be employed in the interior ornamentation of the church.

“ 4. The revenues of the church shall be administered by the missionaries, conjointly with three laymen elected each year by the householders of the parish, until such time as We think fit to institute a change in this matter.

“ 5. The people shall be allowed the space of three years to complete their chapel and provide the same with vestments, etc., and at the end of that time, We forbid the missionary to say Mass in any private house within the district of St. Andrew's.

“ 6. We forbid all further use of the chapel built at Tracadie, as it is unfit for divine service, and no priest shall celebrate Mass therein in future. The people, however, may build a new church there, as well as at East Point and other settlements, so that the inhabitants of these places may sometimes have Mass in their own districts, for it is Our

wish that in future the missionaries say Mass only in places set apart for, and consecrated to that purpose.

“ 7. We permit cemeteries to be opened wherever a chapel shall be built, but they must be blessed and well fenced in.

“ 8. We strongly recommend that the people of these places pay the missionary an annual sum of five shillings, for he shall have to be placed elsewhere, if the mission does not furnish him a fair living.

“ 9. We forbid, under the most severe penalties, that persons should assemble to drink at burials, and We ordain that those who, in future, shall be guilty of excessive drinking on such occasions, cannot be absolved from this sin except by the priest to whom We shall have given special faculties for that purpose.

“ 10. The present regulations shall be translated into Gaelic, and read by the missionary to the inhabitants of St. Andrew's, Tracadie, Naufrage, East Point, Fortune and Three Rivers ; he shall preserve the same for the guidance of his successors and in three years send Us a report of how they have been carried out.”

The above Pastoral was dated at Tracadie, St. John's Island, August 24th, 1803.

The duties of his pastoral visit kept Bishop Denaut for several days at Tracadie and St. Andrew's. The people of the outlying missions, having heard of his arrival, came in crowds to greet their chief pastor and receive, at his hands, the sacrament of Confirmation. At Tracadie, he confirmed two hundred and fifty-six persons, probably in the house of Capt. John Macdonald, the principal residence in the neighbourhood. At St. Andrew's he had service in Burns' House, which served as a chapel, and near which Father MacEachern had erected a small log house wherein he lived at this time. The Bishop was the guest of Father MacEachern during his stay, and closed his visitation of the mission by administering Confirmation to four hundred and twenty-seven persons. Having finished at St. Andrew's, he again stopped at Tracadie and administered Confirmation to seventy-four who had been unable to attend, on the occasion of his former visit.

The diary kept by the Bishop's secretary gives the population of St. Andrew's and its dependent settlements in 1803, as follows :

St. Andrew's.....	173	communicants	454	souls.
Tracadie.....	212	"	425	"
Fortune Bay.....	38	"	83	"
Three Rivers.....	69	"	177	"
Naufrage and East Point.....	178	"	483	"
Total	670	"	1622	"

Thus the missions of Charlottetown, Tracadie and St. Andrew's were first visited by a Bishop, and though he could not speak the language of the people, his presence did not fail to create a most salutary effect. The austere piety and ascetic mien of the venerable servant of God, and the awe akin to idolatry with which he was regarded by a people, few of whom had ever seen a Bishop, were calculated to produce a lasting impression in their minds ; while the prudent advice he gave to priests and people, the rules he drew up for their future guidance were eminently conducive to the welfare of the missions. All parted from the worthy man, cheered by his blessing, strengthened by his counsel and edified by his example.

It remained for him now to visit the Acadian Missions. He accordingly set out for Rustico, where he was awaited with some anxiety by Father Pichard and the people, on account of some troubles that had arisen and rendered the presence of the Bishop necessary. Concerning the nature of these troubles, the Bishop's diary is unfortunately silent, and the uncertain light of lingering local traditions affords no reliable information ; but, whatever they were, they were sufficient to arouse the indignation of the Bishop, who, to punish the unseemly conduct of this portion of his flock, decided to remove their missionary to another post of duty.

At this time the mission boasted a small unfurnished chapel dedicated to St. Augustine, and a rude presbytery containing only one room, where Father Pichard made his home when not engaged in the other missions under his care. There was a little cemetery near the church, which may still be seen near the head of a little

stream that flows by the present parochial farm ¹. Bishop Denaut found fifty-two families at Rustico, making in all two hundred and eighty-five souls of whom one hundred and forty were communicants. He administered the sacrament of Confirmation to two hundred and ninety-seven persons, many of whom had come from the outlying missions.

The visits of Rustico parish came to a close on the 28th of August, and His Lordship proceeded at once to Malpeque. Here he found a small presbytery and a chapel dedicated to St. John the Baptist, which seem to have been built about the year 1796. Malpeque was at this time peopled by different nationalities, Acadians, Scotch, English and Indians. The Acadians numbered 235 souls, the Scotch 353. Eighteen families were English and thirteen, Indians. The total number confirmed was 396, of whom 103 were Scotch, 31 Micmacs, and the remainder Acadians. The population of the other settlements was as follows : Tignish had sixteen families, making fifty-two communicants and one hundred and two souls. These had built a chapel which the Bishop ordered to be dedicated to St. Simon Apostle. At Cascumpeque, there were eight families comprising twenty-one communicants and sixty-five souls. Bedeque had now four families ; Rivière des Blancs five ², and eighteen Indian families made their home on Lennox Island. These latter settlements had no churches and were attached to the mission of Rustico.

At Malpeque, Bishop Denaut's labours in Prince Edward Island came to an end. From there he crossed over to New Brunswick and made his way by Miramichi and Madawaska to Quebec. The changes he made in the administration of the missions in our Island demand from us here a brief reference.

Father Pichard was removed from Rustico and sent over to Nova Scotia, where he took charge of Tracadie and other missions. His place at Rustico was filled by Father De Calonne, who was appointed Vicar General of the Bishop of Quebec and pastor of all the Acadian

1 — On land now owned by Bruno Martin.

2 — Tryon River.

missions. Some rules for his guidance were drawn up and embodied in a pastoral letter written by the Bishop, while at Miramichi on his way to Quebec.

“ Peter Denaut, Bishop of Quebec, etc. .

“ Concerning the missions hereinafter named and actually in charge of Mr. De Calonne, we ordain the following :

“ 1. The people of Rustico and Malpeque shall repair their respective parochial houses, that they may be a suitable lodging place for the missionary until such time as the Bishop may order new ones to be built.

“ 2. As soon as possible, vestments; linen and sacred vessels for the altar shall be furnished by the people of these two missions, as directed by Father De Calonne.

“ 3. They shall place pews in each of their churches, and shall sell the same by public auction at the church door on Sundays. This shall be the rule every time any pew becomes vacant, according to the custom of the Diocese.

“ 4. The revenues of each church shall be in charge of three wardens of whom the first shall retire each year, and his place be taken by the second, and a new warden elected who will be the third.

“ 5. The first warden, who alone is to have charge, the others being only assistants, on retiring from office shall give a statement of the accounts in presence of the old and new wardens and the missionary, who shall see that they are correct. These accounts must be kept according to the form prescribed by the Ritual of Quebec. All meetings of the wardens shall be presided over by the missionary, after having been announced from the pulpit and summoned by ringing the church bell, and at all such the missionary shall have the right to vote. The minutes of these meetings, whether called to elect wardens or to examine accounts, shall be inscribed in a book, signed by the missionary and wardens, and kept in the archives of the church.

“ 6. The inhabitants of both places shall fence the land destined for the use of the missionary, and shall build in each mission a barn and stable for his convenience.

“ 7. Besides the ordinary tithes of grain that the people of Mal-

peque, Cascumpec and Tignish are accustomed to pay, they shall also contribute potatoes, which has not been done heretofore.

“ The people of Rustico shall pay per communicant the sum of six francs until further orders.

“ Given at Miramichi, during our Pastoral visit, Sept. 10th, 1803.”

The removal of Father De Calonne left Charlottetown without a resident priest, and it was destined to remain so for many years. It was not the Bishop's intention, however, that its people should be entirely abandoned. If they could not have a priest continually amongst them, they were to have at least an occasional visit from a neighboring missionary.

Early in the month of August of this year, a Franciscan Friar, the Reverend Father Henry Francis Fitzsimmons, came from Ireland to Prince Edward Island, and to him was entrusted the mission left vacant by Father De Calonne. He had come to take charge of a colony of 300 Scotch Catholics, who were daily expected to arrive on the Island, and the Bishop thought that he could add to his other duties the care of the Charlottetown mission.

His Lordship's instructions to Father Fitzsimmons were that he should take up his residence in whatever place the Scottish emigrants would choose for their settlement. He was to proceed at once to build a parochial house thirty feet square, and near it a chapel large enough for his congregation with a small sacristy attached. Near the church he was to lay out a cemetery of a suitable size. The church was to be well boarded outside and ceiled within and dedicated to St. Thomas the Apostle. He was to provide vestments, build pews and conduct parochial business according to the rules laid down in the other pastoral letters bearing on the same subject. The Bishop concludes his instructions in these words :

“ As long as there is no resident priest in Charlottetown, Father Fitzsimmons shall have charge of the people of the Town and neighbourhood unless he reside further away than St. Andrew's. He may from time to time, according to his prudence and charity, say Mass in the city in a suitable place, and he shall direct the people to provide proper vestments for the purpose.” These instructions are dated at Rustico, August 28th, 1803.

Father Augustine Macdonald, who had arrived in the beginning of this year, was living with his brother Capt. Jno. Macdonald.

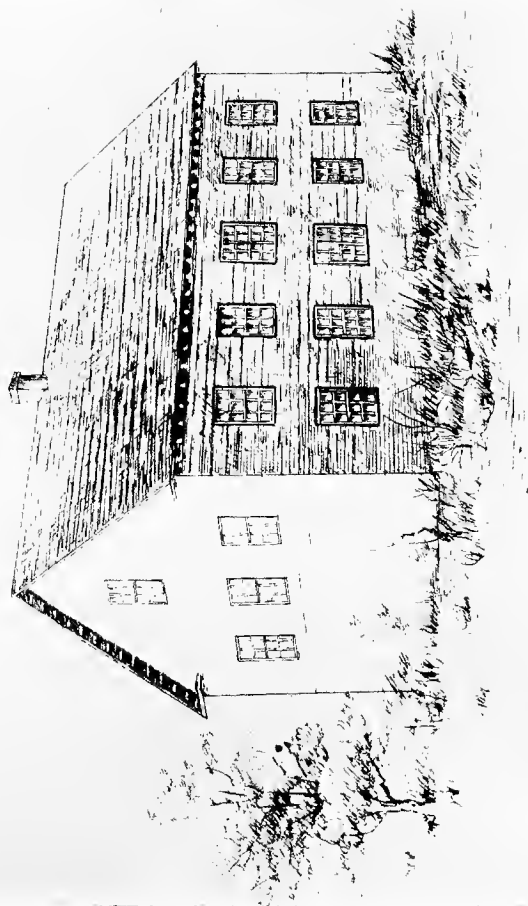
The Bishop gave him the faculties of a missionary, with permission to use the same only in the mission of Tracadie, and amongst his brother's family servants and tenants, for which services he was to receive the sum of £30.0.0 per year.

Father MacEachern's faculties were renewed, and he continued in charge of all his former missions including Tracadie and Malpeque.

Such were the arrangements made by Bishop Denaut for the spiritual welfare of his flock in Prince Edward Island. They were undoubtedly intended for the best, and with the exception of Father Pichard's removal, would seem calculated to produce beneficent results. But unfortunately they lacked the element of stability. In a short time they were laid aside, and then followed a period of neglect and apathy on the part of the authorities, that threatened to dry up the wellsprings of devotion among the people.

Father Fitzsimmons' stay here was short. Indeed, if it were not that his name occurs in Bishop Denaut's register, we could not discover that he had ever been here, so completely has every trace of his sojourn disappeared. We know, however, that he remained here only a short time, for the Highlanders whom he came to serve changed their minds before leaving Scotland, and instead of coming to Prince Edward Island, they emigrated to the Province of Ontario. Father Fitzsimmons followed them to Upper Canada, and labored there for at least fifteen months prior to June, 1806, as we learn from a letter of that date written by Bishop Plessis to Father Burke at Halifax.

In like manner Father De Calonne's pastorate at Rustico was of short duration. Bishop Denaut had invited him to Quebec, where a more desirable position would be given him; and as he was on the eve of setting out for Canada, he was hurriedly called to France in the autumn of 1804, and thus closed his labours in Prince Edward Island.



ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

CHAPTER XVI.

FATHER MACEACHERN THE ONLY PRIEST IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.—
BUILDS ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH.—OBSTACLES HE MEETS
WITH.—APPEALS FOR HELP.

The clerical changes referred to at the close of the preceding chapter left Father MacEachern, once more, sole guardian of the interests of Holy Church in Prince Edward Island. True, Father Augustine lived at Tracadie ; but he was an old man and had come hither to rest, and for this reason, could not do more than assume the spiritual charge of his brother's servants and tenants. In 1802, Rev. Alexander Macdonald arrived at Arisaig, Nova Scotia, and received from the Bishop of Quebec the care of all the missions on the Gulf Shore. By his arrival, Father MacEachern was relieved of the obligation of going to the Mainland, but the missions of Prince Edward Island, now depending on him alone, gave him abundant opportunities of displaying his zeal for souls.

These missions were growing every year more numerous and more populous. Emigrants were continually pouring into the country from Ireland and Scotland. No well organized emigrations, such as that of 1772 and that of 1790, were now taking place ; but scarcely a ship arrived from Europe that did not bring a number of settlers, eager to take up land and hew out for themselves homes in the forest. The consequent increase of population was a source of great anxiety to Father MacEachern, whose unaided efforts were unequal to the task of attending to the spiritual wants of so many people. The work

which, according to Father De Calonne's testimony, was too arduous for three, now devolved upon one; and yet he kept the even tenor of his way, never quailing before hardship nor shrinking from duty.

Bishop Denaut, as already stated, commanded the people to build a church at St. Andrew's. To ensure success in the undertaking, he appointed Father De Calonne his Vicar General, and gave him the necessary authority to enforce the regulations laid down in the Pastoral Letter of August 24th, 1803. His Lordship feared that Father MacEachern would be too indulgent towards the people, on account of their straitened circumstances, and that the work would consequently suffer through his lack of severity. He accordingly invested Father De Calonne with more extended powers, and bade him insist on having his wishes accomplished with as little delay as possible.

In pursuance of this mandate, Father De Calonne issued a circular letter to the people of St. Andrew's, in which he reminded them of the instructions contained in the Pastoral of Bishop Denaut, relating to the building of a new church, on the site which His Lordship had chosen. Among other things, the Abbé enjoined that a bench, sufficiently long to seat six persons, should be placed on each side of the altar, one to be occupied by the wardens, sacristan and schoolmaster, functionaries who, especially the first named, play an important role in the ecclesiastical affairs of Quebec, the other for the singers and for clergymen. This latter provision must have surprised the people not a little. A place for singers was eminently fitting; but to reserve seats for clergymen with only one such in the entire Island must have seemed to those canny Scotchmen an act of extraordinary foresight. This letter is all that remains to us of Father De Calonne's efforts as Vicar General. A few days after it was written he set sail for London, and Prince Edward Island never saw him more. After having spent some time in London he returned to Canada and died at Three Rivers, Province of Quebec, on the 16th of October, 1822.

The burden of carrying out Bishop Denaut's instructions thus lay on the shoulders of Father MacEachern, and he went to work in earnest, and was soon in a position to give a report of substantial progress. On the 28th of October, 1805, he writes as follows: "I

went last Autumn to Merigomish and engaged two carpenters to hew and frame our church which was put up in the latter end of July. We built a good stone wall from $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet to 3 feet above the surface of the earth, to receive the frame, and two walls from end to end to support the gallery posts.

“ The frame is, as ordered, sixty feet by thirty-six, and eighteen feet post, with a choir over the door, and galleries on both sides, leaving twenty feet clear in the middle. By this time we have it rough-boarded and shingled, and mean to paint the roof without loss of time. All the people of Tracadie and St. Peter’s Bay have contributed their quantum towards the building without a dissenting voice or one murmur. We will get some assistance from Naufrage and Three Rivers, but do not expect much from East Point or Fortune Bay.

“ At Naufrage, we have a chapel 34 x 24 feet already covered in ; another at East Point nearly of the same dimensions.”

Bishop Denaut’s wishes were thus on the way to realization. The rules he had laid down were being carried out, slowly it may be, but yet as speedily as could be expected in the circumstances. No one could be more eager than Father MacEachern in this matter ; no one could be more impressed with the importance and urgency of the work ; yet he was loath to press the people, whose wants were many and resources few. When delays occurred owing to remissness on their part, he was ever patient ; perhaps too much so, for probably there were times when patience almost ceased to be a virtue. But he knew their circumstances better than any other man could. Fifteen years of close touch with their most intimate concerns furnished a clear insight into their condition ; and even when they were evidently in fault, he was more disposed to pity than blame. Hence, in a letter to the Bishop, he thus refers to the building of the church : “ I am getting something done to our chapel here, but not as much as I would wish. Some are poor, others are backward, carpenters’ wages very high, every kind of materials excessively dear, so that things do not go on with that activity that could be wished.”

This was precisely what Bishop Denaut had foreseen and what he had hoped to remedy by appointing Father De Calonne his Vicar

General. He knew the Scotch people were tardy and dilatory, and that they required considerable flattery, a fair share of persuasion and an unlimited amount of scolding before they would be induced to do much for the support of religion. As a flatterer Father MacEachern was possessed of no mean ability; his persuasive powers, too, were excellent; whilst in the white heat of an impassioned scolding the Gaelic gave to his tongue a suppleness, a volubility and a wealth of sarcasm to which few Anglo-Saxons can aspire; but when it came to a question of financial affairs, his heart was too soft and severity gave way to compassion. Father De Calonne himself bears witness to this trait in the character of his confrere. "I reproach Father MacEachern," he wrote, "that he is not vigorous enough in enforcing the Bishop's orders. Of course he has to do with a people very disobedient on this point. The Scotch were not accustomed to contribute towards the Church in the Old Country, and they think to get along here in the same deplorable way. Many did not even want to pay Father MacEachern a dollar per communicant, although the poor man is overburdened with work. And when I tried to force them, I had more trouble with the good priest himself than I had with the people." Father MacEachern, be it said, laboured not for money but for the glory of God; his whole career is a shining example of disinterestedness in this respect.

Besides the poverty and apathy of the people, a new difficulty arose that added greatly to his troubles, and tended not a little to retard the building of the church. This was no other than the determined opposition of Capt. John Macdonald of Glenaladale. This gentleman, it seems, was not satisfied with the situation of St. Andrew's church. Consulting his own private convenience rather than the public good, he would have preferred that a site had been chosen nearer his residence. Though a good man and an excellent Catholic, he was nevertheless a typical landlord, and proud of his ascendancy over the people, he thought that his opinion was entitled to great consideration on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities. Finding, however, that other and wiser counsels prevailed, his displeasure knew no bounds.

Our readers may remember that when the St. Andrew's property

was bought, it was the people's intention to have two parishes formed east of Charlottetown, separated by the eastern boundary line of Lot 36. As years went by, however, this plan was found impracticable, as almost all the new emigrants settled farther east or west, and scarcely one took up land between Lot 36 and Charlottetown. Hence Father MacEachern, having at heart the greater good of the entire people, was convinced that a fairly large church built at St. Andrew's would carry out the purpose of the original purchasers, if at the same time smaller chapels would be erected at East Point and Naufrage. Bishop Denaut concurred in this opinion, after having learned the facts of the case from reliable and disinterested persons.

Capt. Macdonald, however, opposed this plan, and as he was all-powerful in the locality, his opposition was a serious impediment to the progress of the work. Not only did he oppose it himself, but he tried to drive his tenantry into open rebellion with Father MacEachern. He forbade their contributing to the expenses incurred for the new church, and wanted to withdraw them entirely from that parish by having them assemble at his own house on Sunday, where Mass was said by his brother Father Augustine Macdonald.

Father MacEachern was gentle and forbearing, and not disposed to quarrel with any one, much less with a person of Mr. Macdonald's standing in the community. But, on the other hand, he would not be deterred from duty by opposition from any quarter. He accordingly kept on with the work as best he could, apparently unconscious of any effort being made to thwart its progress. This apparent unconcern on his part was more exasperating to Capt. Macdonald than open rupture, so he made a direct appeal to the Bishop of Quebec. He had a weakness for making a pompous display of his scholarly attainments by composing long documents in quasi legal style, and his memorial to the Bishop of Quebec, on this occasion, partook of this general character of his literary compositions. It was long and wearisome, filled with minute details bearing on the past, present and future of religion in Prince Edward Island, the plans that had been adopted for the education of clergy, all of which seemed to be jeopardized by the building of a church at St. Andrew's.

Father De Calonne had returned to Canada while this matter was under consideration, and as he was familiar with all the facts of the case, the Bishop submitted the question to his judgment.

Father De Calonne approved of Father MacEachern's conduct. Of course, the good Abbé did not fail to profit by such a golden opportunity of having a good fling at the Scotch of Prince Edward Island, as he formerly had at the Irish, by contrasting their religious apathy with the generous spirit of the Acadians ; but he, nevertheless, triumphantly vindicated the stand taken by Father MacEachern, in obedience to the wishes of Bishop Denaut. Amongst other things he says : " Concerning the church (St. Andrew's), I cannot by any means agree with Capt. Macdonald. On the one hand, he is afraid it will interfere with his plan (for educating clergy), and on the other, as he wishes to have a church built nearer his home, he regards that as a sufficient reason for preventing his people from contributing to the one already begun. Much as I respect the man and admire his zeal, in this matter his own petty personal interests have warped his better judgment." He then relates how carefully Bishop Denaut had considered the matter, and how he had examined the question in all its phases before laying down the rules so faithfully adhered to by Father MacEachern.

Then follows a long Jeremiad anent Scottish perversity. Their utter indifference to the splendor of external worship and their want of zeal for the beauty of God's house are depicted with all the flourishes of a master hand, whilst the opposite virtues of the Acadians are set forth in a dithyrambic effusion that leaves no doubt of the writer's convictions. Near the end he adds very decisively : " Capt. Macdonald cannot and should not forbid his people to pay their share towards the new church, for they form part of the parish assigned to it."

The question was thus definitively settled. Capt. Macdonald soon grew weary of having his house crowded with people on Sundays, and gradually the people returned to their former allegiance.

The beginning of the year 1806 witnessed the death of Bishop Denaut, who passed away at Longueuil, near Montreal, on the 17th

of January, and was succeeded by his Coadjutor, Right Rev. Joseph Octave Plessis.

Bishop Denaut was a pious and holy Bishop, eminently conservative in his ways, and more disposed to be concerned with the minutiae of the Ritual than with the broad lines of Diocesan administration. He lacked the broad minded, enlightened views of his successor, and consequently never grasped the genius of the English speaking people, who formed a considerable portion of his flock in the Lower Provinces.

With the accession of Bishop Plessis to the See of Quebec, a new era opened for the Church in Canada. The rusty shackles forged by bigotry were cast off thanks to his enlightened policy; and the open hostility of the civil authorities was changed into respect and admiration for the Church whose influence for good they had so long hampered. Prudent administrator was he, who grasping the grand possibilities of his time, led forth the Church from the darkness of Egyptian bondage to the full light of religious liberty. As the heart sends forth the rich, red blood, carrying life and vigour to the extremities of the body, so did the genius of this illustrious Prelate vivify and invigorate the Church in every part of his immense Diocese. Prince Edward Island, too, shared in his pastoral solicitude. It heard his voice speaking the language of true and sincere devotedness, and responsive to the call, it awoke to a life of religious activity, after years of neglect and abandonment.

Bishop Plessis and Father MacEachern had not yet met, though for years they had kept up an interesting and edifying correspondence. From the letters thus passing between them they had gained an insight into each other's character, and the esteem engendered by this slight acquaintance gave rise to a mutual desire of closer intimacy. Accordingly, the Bishop invited Father MacEachern to come to Quebec, where he held out to him the promise of a kind and hearty welcome. Father MacEachern gladly accepted the Bishop's invitation and began to look forward to the visit with fond anticipations. Sixteen years had elapsed since his arrival in America, and during all this time, he never knew a day's relaxation from active and arduous duty. It was surely time that he should have a holiday, a short respite from

the drudgery of his busy life. There were other reasons too, and graver ones, that made his trip to Quebec a necessity. He wanted to confer personally with the Bishop regarding the wants of Prince Edward Island. He believed, and rightly too, that now was a favourable time to do this, as the present illustrious occupant of the See of Quebec could better appreciate his motives, more fully grasp the situation than any of the former Bishops, and consequently, would be more earnest in endeavoring to remove the unsatisfactory conditions under which the people of these missions were labouring.

But how was he to go to Quebec? How undertake a journey of many weeks, and he the only priest in charge of so many souls? How reconcile the people to his absence, amid the dangers and uncertainties of their surroundings? This was a real difficulty. Father MacEachern was practically alone; every moment of his time was taken up, and even after efforts truly heroic, he could pay only a casual visit to the various settlements, and then afford the people an opportunity of approaching the sacraments once a year. He was therefore obliged to postpone his visit until more favourable times, and accordingly explains to the Bishop his reason for doing so. In a letter dated November 29th, 1806, he writes: "My not going to Canada, last summer, was owing to the sickness of many of my hearers in this extensive mission. I went thrice to Three Rivers, a distance of forty or fifty miles to the eastward and southward, in the dead of winter, and twice to Malpeque, sixty miles to the westward. These jaunts and many others of less length ran away with the winter, so that the summer was spent and all the direct opportunities to Quebec passed before I could serve my flock. I would wish to have it in my power to explain *viva voce* the distance from chapel to chapel, the number of their hearers, their places of abode, the mode and difficulties of travelling summer and winter, with the circumstances of the people, so that your Lordship might adopt such measures and propose the same to our people as might morally ensure to them a succession of clergymen."

"Our people," he continues, "see their wants, and I am convinced they will implicitly obey Your Lordship's orders, as far as their

abilities can go." He concludes by saying: "If I can do myself the honour and pleasure of going to see Your Lordship next summer, I will give the best information I am capable of relative to all the missions on the coast of this Island, Nova Scotia and Cape Breton."

His visit to Quebec is thus put off till the following year. His ardent wish of meeting Bishop Plessis cannot be realized at present. He must wait another year, only to find the same obstacle in his way making a further postponement necessary.

It would indeed be impossible to imagine a person more busily employed than Father MacEachern during these years, when the care of the whole province devolved upon him. To visit the sick alone was a task attended by hardships of which we cannot form, to-day, any adequate conception. Night and day he was on the road, going from place to place in all kinds of weather and in the most primitive conveyances. Many a time he would reach his home at St. Andrew's, worn out with fatigue, and there find a messenger awaiting him, craving him to come to the relief of a person lying ill in one of the distant settlements. Such a call could suffer no delay. So, without rest or pause he begins another journey, carrying with him always his vestments and portable altar, that he may be able to say Mass at the settlement when he arrives, and give Holy Communion to the one whose sickness occasioned the journey.

His appeals to Quebec for assistance had hitherto been in vain. No Canadian priest had come to share his labours; though he had never failed to impress on the proper authorities the manifold wants of the missions. Even the priests who had come from France were not permitted to remain. One had been removed and the other at least encouraged to depart by Bishop Denaut, who made no effort to provide a successor to them. Despairing of help from that quarter he wrote to one of the Scottish Bishops who had been his classmate at Valladolid. Recalling the fact that Scotland had already given two missionaries to Prince Edward Island and several to the Mainland, he pleads for a continuance of that generosity in language at once firm and pathetic. After having given a minute geographical description of Prince Edward Island, he goes on to say: "When we

go by the woods, which is generally the case, we go from ten to forty miles without meeting a settlement, sometimes by a blaze and often in snowshoes. It is not the number of people we have to serve that distresses us, but the scattered way in which they are forced to settle. You will more readily conceive than I can describe, how difficult a task it is for any one single handed to pay even an annual visit to so many different settlements. And when the visitation of the sick is in question, no human being can answer the different calls, more especially in winter when no human face can brave a north-west wind. I have gone eighty and often ninety miles to see sick people, and while we are running to one, another dies in our rear, calling for spiritual assistance, and none perhaps within one hundred and fifty miles of him."

"Our people die without the sacraments, and we cannot help it. If a clergyman can hear the confessions of his people once a year in even a cursory way, he does a great deal; and as for instruction, it is out of the question, let his intention be ever so good or his abilities ever so great. Our case is really deplorable."

As an example to be followed he holds up what had been done for the people of Newfoundland by the Bishops of Ireland, and says:

"Newfoundland was, a few years ago, destitute of all spiritual aid; yet the Irish Bishops sent out five or six able missionaries who, by their example and preaching, brought that once abandoned country to a regular, sober, loyal congregation."

"They have now a Bishop in St. John's, and are respected by the officers of the Government, as men who do more for the policy of the settlements than all the civil laws in existence."

"They sent another to Halifax, Nova Scotia, some years ago, and in acknowledgment for his abilities, the Government settled a pension of a hundred pounds a year on him." He then asks, in his own homely phraseology: "Why could not the Scots Mission cast an anchor to windward as well as the Irish?"

In a former chapter we had occasion to notice Father De Calonne's outspoken opinion regarding the Irish of Charlottetown. Now many of these had come hither from Newfoundland, and consequently were

either the persons who directly profited by the labors of the “able missionaries” referred to above or their immediate descendants. It is difficult to see how they could form part of a regular, sober congregation in Newfoundland and become slaves of vice on their arrival in this country. It is just, then, to conclude that Father MacEachern’s longer experience of these people led him to form a different estimate of their character, and, indeed, in all his correspondence, we look in vain for one word of blame for the Irish people in Prince Edward Island, or one expression that would lead us to suppose that they were less docile to his teaching, or less edifying in their conduct than the rest of his flock. Father MacEachern was not, as a rule, a respecter of persons. In him national sentiment and racial prejudice were subservient to one end, the greater glory of God. Hence Scotch, Irish, French all shared in his zeal for souls. He made himself all to all that he might gain all to Christ; and if wickedness prevailed in certain localities, and scandals arose, he sympathized with the sinner while condemning the sin, and all the more readily, seeing that the spiritual neglect to which the people were subject, owing to the scarcity of priests, might be put forth in almost every instance as an extenuating circumstance.

The Superiors of the Scotch Missions could not render any assistance to Father MacEachern. They had already sent several priests to Upper Canada, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, and they thought it was time that the Diocese of Quebec should furnish priests for its own missions.

There was some truth in this contention, for no Canadian priest had yet permanently resided in Prince Edward Island, and surely the souls in this remote region were as precious in the sight of God as those in the parishes that fringed the St. Lawrence. Bishop Plessis, from the first, was convinced of his responsibility in the matter. No sooner had he assumed the administration of the Diocese, than he realized that clergy would have to be supplied to these outlying missions, if the faith were to be preserved among the people. He did not forget Prince Edward Island, for on the 21st October, 1807, he writes to Father MacEachern as follows: “The warm desire I enter-

tain of providing a succession of Scotch clergyman, both in your mission and in Upper Canada, induced me last year to place at my own expense three young Scotch boys in the Seminary of Montreal."

"Although very little advanced in their duties, yet they may be a valuable help in the time to come. However, as that number is far under the multiplied wants of your people, it becomes necessary to adopt some further measures for the same object. The plan of Capt. John Macdonald, lately submitted to my examination by the Rev. Mr. Burke, seems wisely and perfectly calculated with the circumstances of the Island, and I am of opinion that it must be immediately put into execution; for you know that no less than ten or twelve years are to be allowed for the education of a child from the alphabet to the priesthood."

The plan of which mention is here made by the Bishop was first brought up at a meeting held in 1794. The people had been called together for the purpose of considering the question of the scarcity of priests in these missions, and Capt. John Macdonald suggested that a yearly assessment be levied on each householder for a term of years, and also on every unmarried man, who could be considered as supporting himself independent of his family. The sum of these assessments was to be employed for the education of young men manifesting an inclination for the priesthood.

This, in brief, is the plan now sanctioned by the Bishop and imposed on the people with all the weight of an episcopal command.

Nothing could be more pleasing to Father MacEachern than this letter of the venerable Bishop. He saw in it, of course, an increase of labor for himself. But what of that, as long as something was done to perpetuate the good work? A direct command is what he had been wanting for years, and now that he has it, he goes to work with a light heart and renewed energy to carry out his Superior's views. On the 30th of May, 1808, he writes to the Bishop, showing how he has already made a good and hopeful beginning, notwithstanding the many other calls that were daily made upon him.

"Your Lordship's letter of the 21st October last", he writes, "I duly received, and communicated its contents to my hearers, who are

willing to fall on such a plan as will enable Your Lordship to have a succession of clergymen educated for these missions. I have been for these years past explaining to our people the necessity of adopting such a measure ; but a positive order from our Superior was and will be as yet necessary before these things are brought to their proper bearing. Our intention was to have called a meeting of those who are most contiguous to this place, in the course of the winter ; but I was called to the East Point before Christmas, from that back here again, and in January to Malpeck. I returned on the last day of February, and in March was sent for to Three Rivers. When I observed that time was passing without being able to do anything decisive towards the object proposed, I determined to begin at said Three Rivers, and after very little consultation came to the resolution of assessing every man sixteen years of age and upwards, at the rate of twenty shillings per annum for three years, and should the sums so collected prove inadequate to our exigencies, then all the young men coming up to the said age of sixteen must be taken in so as to fill up the deficiencies and wants."

" I have always found that the people are alarmed at the proposal of great sums at the first setting forth, and consequently proposed the above method as the most equitable and least burdensome."

" I proceeded thence by the Bay of Fortune, and the south side of the Island towards the East Point, serving the people as I went and taking their names. Thence around said Point and along shore to the westward, until I arrived home about the beginning of this month. The members on said tour to the east side of St. Peter's Bay come to two hundred and seventy three, and when I have taken all the names of the different districts, I will do myself the honor to communicate every thing that is done to Your Lordship."

Our readers can see from the above how much extra work devolved upon Father MacEachern ; yet no word of complaint does he utter. No one knows better than he the gravity of the situation, and how important it is that provision of this kind be made for the future of religion in these missions.

From his arrival in America, this had been his greatest anxiety ; and even now, he does not fail to tell the Bishop that unless missionaries are speedily furnished religion will inevitably suffer.

“ The want of pastors,” he says, “ in these countries is dreadful, and those of us who have been long in the service are now getting the worse of the wear, and as the people are becoming more numerous and of course looking for and settling in distant situations without any prospect of a supply of missionaries, their and our case is very serious.”

CHAPTER XVII.

UNSATISFACTORY CONDITION OF THE ACADIANS.—EFFORTS TO SECURE
PRIESTS FOR THEM.—DEATH OF FATHER AUGUSTINE AND
CAPT. JOHN MACDONALD.

Notwithstanding Father MacEachern's efforts to procure for all the consolations of religion, it was impossible for him to respond to the numerous calls made on him and give to his flock the full attention they required. This was true especially of the Acadian missions, whose people were, as a rule, more exacting of spiritual attention than the Irish or Scotch colonists. Much discontent therefore prevailed amongst the Acadians. They were growing more and more dissatisfied as the years went by, and no priest of their own tongue was sent to them. A visit of Father MacEachern for a few weeks in the year was about all the spiritual care they received.

For the rest of the time they were deprived of Mass, and of an opportunity of approaching the sacraments.

To a people even in the fullness of health and strength this was a cruel deprivation; but if sickness came and Death's angel hovered near, then their condition was indeed pitiable, because to secure the services of a priest for the dying was a task that might fill the boldest and the hardiest with dismay. It meant a wearisome journey to St. Andrew's or perhaps to some more distant settlement, and that with no assurance of finding Father MacEachern who, perhaps at the very moment he was most needed, would be away in some other direction on a similar errand of mercy.

The same unsatisfactory condition obtained amongst the Catholics

of Charlottetown; but they had the advantage of living near the centre of the Island and could sometimes intercept the missionary as he went hither and thither. For this reason they saw him oftener and enjoyed more of his attentions than the people of the more remote settlements.

It is not surprising then, that murmurs arose and grievous complaints were heard amongst the abandoned Acadian people; nor can we wonder that many, despairing of ever having a priest, were seriously considering the question of crossing over to the Mainland, where they hoped to enjoy better facilities of practising their religion.

Whatever benefit the people themselves might have reaped from this step, it certainly would have proved prejudicial to the Island, and especially to the landlords, whose tenants they were; and accordingly, the mere mention of their prospective departure aroused the active sympathies of Lieutenant Colonel Compton, whose estate comprised the Acadian settlement of Malpeque.

On the 10th of August, 1805, he wrote a strong letter to the Bishop of Quebec, setting forth the spiritual wants of the Acadians and begging that two priests be sent to assume charge of their missions. Amongst other things he observes: "It is now near a year since my dear friend the Abbé de Calonne left the Island, in all which time, except about a month that Father MacEachern was here, Mass has not been said in my village which contains upwards of two hundred Roman Catholic souls. I speak of the Acadians only, for the Catholics of the village more than double that number.

"I am proprietor of the township of which this village forms a part, and together with a numerous family who are Roman Catholics, reside in this village. I have, as I understood was Your Lordship's wish, attached to the church six acres of cleared land."

"The inhabitants have repaired in a good manner the church and the tithes they pay are considerable and daily increasing."

"I trust Your Lordship will do me the honor to write me by return of the ship which takes this from the Island to Quebec; and, also, by the same opportunity two good priests will come, one always to reside in this village, and the other to attend the Acadians on the Island generally."

In a postscript to the above he adds : " Though I inform Your Lordship that I have set apart six acres of land for the church, it is my intention after a little to establish a new village on this township, on a plan so as to place the church exactly in the centre of the village ; we shall subscribe liberally towards building the church, and forty acres of land shall be attached to the Cure or presbytère."

This letter did not reach Quebec till after the death of Bishop Denaut, to whom it was addressed. It found Bishop Plessis absorbed in the affairs of a Diocese newly devolved upon him, and whose administration had grown so unwieldy as to defy the efforts of any one Bishop.

His first care, therefore, was to apply to Rome for a Coadjutor, recommending one of his priests, the Reverend Bernard Claude Panet, for the position, and whilst these negotiations were engaging his attention, Colonel Compton's letter arrived, bringing to the busy Bishop a fresh budget of anxieties and cares.

The matter thus remained in abeyance. Nothing was done nor could anything be done for the moment to improve the spiritual condition of the Acadians. They were left to nurse their discontent and foster their dissatisfaction until, grown desperate, many left the Island and others were preparing to follow at an early date.

Alarmed at the prospect of seeing his township entirely depopulated, Colonel Compton again becomes their advocate and makes another urgent appeal in their behalf. So great is his concern that he becomes almost reckless in his promises to the Bishop. He declares that he is willing to contribute one hundred pounds towards building a new church, and to give to the same any quantity of land that may be deemed reasonable, provided a pastor is sent to the mission. He goes so far as to suggest the priest who, in his opinion, would be the most desirable, viz : the Reverend Father Boussin, whose acquaintance he had made on the passage to Prince Edward Island. With the true spirit of the typical landed proprietor, he proffers advice to the Bishop regarding the time the missionary asked for should spend in the different settlements, and, of course, does not fail to give a large share of preference to his own township. He concludes by saying : " I know

not how successful this application will be, but it leaves me the satisfaction of having done all in my power to make my tenants happy, as well in their spiritual as temporal affairs." (October 19th, 1807).

From so many professions of sympathy on the part of Colonel Compton and his repeated promises of assistance in building a church and maintaining a pastor, we would be led to suppose that he was prepared to go to any length of sacrifice in the interest of the Acadians ; yet his subsequent relations with them do not indicate that his motives were always disinterested and his intentions devoid of selfishness.

Perhaps he had grown weary of holding out inducements, seeing that no advantage was taken of them. These promises were made on the expressed condition that at least one priest would be sent to the Acadian missions, and as this condition was not fulfilled, he naturally felt himself released from all obligation in the matter. Nor can we blame him in this, for it is not to be supposed that he, a layman and a Protestant, should be more interested in the welfare of the people than those upon whose conscience lay the responsibility of providing for their spiritual necessities.

As foreshadowed in his letter to Bishop Denaut, he resolved to change the site of the village, and have the church placed in a more central locality, ostensibly for the greater convenience of the parishioners. This was in itself perhaps desirable, and the people very willingly went to work and hauled the old church over a mile and a half, to a site near the " Pavillion," the residence of Mr. Compton.

But when this had been accomplished, difficulties arose that brought matters to a deadlock, and tinged the future of the mission with the sombre hue of ruin. Mr. Compton had promised to give to the church a piece of land, and the people never doubting his sincerity had not secured a title to the same before hauling the church ; but now, when they ask him to fulfil his promise, they are met with an evasion. Conditions are attached to the bargain and terms involved in the contract which the people had not anticipated and to which they refuse to consent.

If the proprietor is arbitrary in his demand, they are no less stub-

born and steadfast in their refusal. Further negotiations tended rather to excite ill feelings than to effect a settlement of the question, so the entire scheme was finally abandoned. The church was left on the spot to which they had hauled it, whilst the parochial house remained on the original site a mile and a half distant.

Both soon fell into disrepair, because there being no priest residing in the mission, the people grew careless and no one took any active interest in house or church. In this way the affairs of the mission suffered, and its progress both spiritual and temporal was unfortunately retarded.

In the meantime the people of Rustico were doing something towards the improvement of their mission. Though deprived by the Bishop of a pastor whom they dearly loved, still they did not give way to bitter resentment, but were trying to carry out His Lordship's injunctions regarding their church. Instead of repairing or rather finishing the old building, they decided to build a new one larger and more in keeping with the dignity of divine worship. Father MacEachern went frequently amongst them to encourage them in their laudable efforts, and on the 29th of November, 1806, he could thus report to the Bishop: "The French of Rustico are about building a new chapel the incoming spring, forty-five feet by thirty-two, and sixteen feet in the post."

The incoming spring however found differences of opinion prevailing amongst them. The selection of a site proved a real difficulty that greatly retarded the work. The promoters of the scheme became divided into two parties, each maintaining its own opinion with misguided zeal, and manifesting no disposition to yield to the views of the other. Party spirit ran so high that two sites were chosen and building operations begun on each. But wiser counsels prevailed. The contending parties, perceiving the folly of their conduct, came to an agreement, the result of a prudent compromise, and chose the site upon which stands to-day the parish church of St. Augustine.

Whilst these events were taking place Bishop Plessis did not lose sight of the missions of Prince Edward Island. Amid the manifold duties of his high office he did not forget the spiritual wants of these

remote regions. He profited by the presence of Abbé de Calonne in London to make another effort to secure the services of French priests, and for a time with a good prospect of success. Father De Calonne assured him that there were good hopes that at least one might be induced to come hither, and on receipt of this pleasing intelligence he hastened to convey the same to Father MacEachern in a letter dated August 20th, 1806.

“The Abbé De Calonne,” he writes, “intends to come again to his former mission, or to send thither a priest if he may be allowed to enter into the Province of Lower Canada. So he wrote me in the beginning of May. Whatever priest shall happen to reach your Island with recommendation from him may exercise the same spiritual faculties as he did himself.”

This was good news for Father MacEachern and for the Catholic people generally. Unfortunately, however, it was not to be. Delays occurred and obstacles arose, so that after a year of anxious waiting another letter comes from the Bishop to Father MacEachern, in which he says: “A French clergyman of the name of Merlin was on the eve of quitting England and of coming to your help. He was strongly recommended by the Abbé De Calonne, but unfortunately met obstacles which obliged him to delay his departure to the next spring.”

The obstacles, here mentioned by His Lordship, arose from the opposition of the civil authorities in London. Since the conquest of Canada they had always opposed the emigration of French clergy to this country, fearing, perhaps, that their influence might be exercised to stir up the people to acts of insubordination or disloyalty.

Consequently, passports could be procured only in very rare cases, and after a process of official formality drawn out to vexatious lengths. In the instance to which we here refer, however, the obstacles were more imaginary than real, for the Governor of Prince Edward Island, as we shall presently see, was willing to receive Father Merlin even without a passport from the British Government.

As soon as the Acadians learned that negotiations had been begun to secure a French priest for their missions, they at once presented a

petition to Governor Des Barres, who had succeeded General Fanning, in 1805, praying that he would place no difficulties in the way of the clergyman, whose presence in the community they so earnestly desired. The petition was presented to His Excellency by Colonel Compton, and was couched on the following terms :

“ To His Excellency Joseph Frederick Walter Des Barres, Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief of His Majesty’s Island of Prince Edward.

“ The humble petition of the Acadian French of Prince Edward Island

“ Humbly Sheweth,

“ That your petitioners long desirous of obtaining a priest vernacular to their language, in number upwards of nine hundred souls, have, through the interference of the Honorable Colonel Compton, received information of a very respectable missionary, thoroughly recommended by the Right Reverend Bishop of Quebec, who shortly is expected to repair to this Colony, and your petitioners beg leave to quote the following paragraph of the Bishop’s letter : ‘ N’y ayant pas de plus sûrs moyens de conserver les sujets dans les vrais principes de morale et de loyauté que de leur procurer des pasteurs fidèles et qui leur inculquent ces principes avec ceux de la religion.’

“ Your petitioners crave leave humbly to represent to Your Excellency that, firmly attached as we are to our Benign Sovereign, to His Government, and to Your Excellency’s person, we all fully confide in Your Excellency’s zeal in promoting the welfare and exerting your endeavours to render the progeny of the inhabitants of this colony loyal, religious and consequently valuable subjects.

“ Therefore your petitioners humbly conceive that to attain the above desirable ends, such a priest as is above recommended by the Bishop of Canada would be a valuable acquisition to His Majesty in instructing the old and forming the minds of the progeny of the Acadians of this Island.

“ Your petitioners (all the Acadians of this Island) therefore humbly pray that Your Excellency would be pleased to exert your endeavours in obtaining for Monsieur Merlin from His Majesty’s

Minister, a passport to repair to this Island, or that if (in the full conviction that hereafter said passport should be obtained) Mr. Merlin should arrive without one, that then you would be pleased to permit said priest to remain until Your Excellency thought the proper officers should be acquainted with His Majesty's pleasure.

“ And Your Excellency's Loyal Acadian Suppliants, as in duty bound, will ever pray.”

Governor Des Barres received this petition with the spirit of politeness and urbanity that distinguished him. He promised to interest himself in the matter and to see to it, that no difficulties on the part of the civil authorities would stand in the way of any priest who might come to labor in the Acadian missions.

Colonel Compton informs the Bishop of the Governor's kindness by letter in which he says: “ I presented a petition to His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Des Barres, in the name of the Acadians of this Island, with a long list of names subjoined, which petition was very graciously received. His Excellency was so good as to assure me that he would do all that depended on him, and that should Monsieur Merlin arrive on the Island before a passport is obtained, he will not fail receiving the Lieutenant Governor's protection.”

But the expected succor never came. France sent no help to the Acadian people of Prince Edward Island. The Bishop's efforts, the people's desires, and the Governor's promise of protection are alike unavailing; and Father MacEachern is left to bear alone “ the heat and burden of the day.”

He was now absolutely alone. Father Augustine Macdonald who had hitherto shared his exile was no more. After a short illness, brought on by careless blood-letting—the great cure-all of the day—he died at Tracadie, in 1807, and was buried beside his cousin Father James, in the old French cemetery of Scotch Fort.

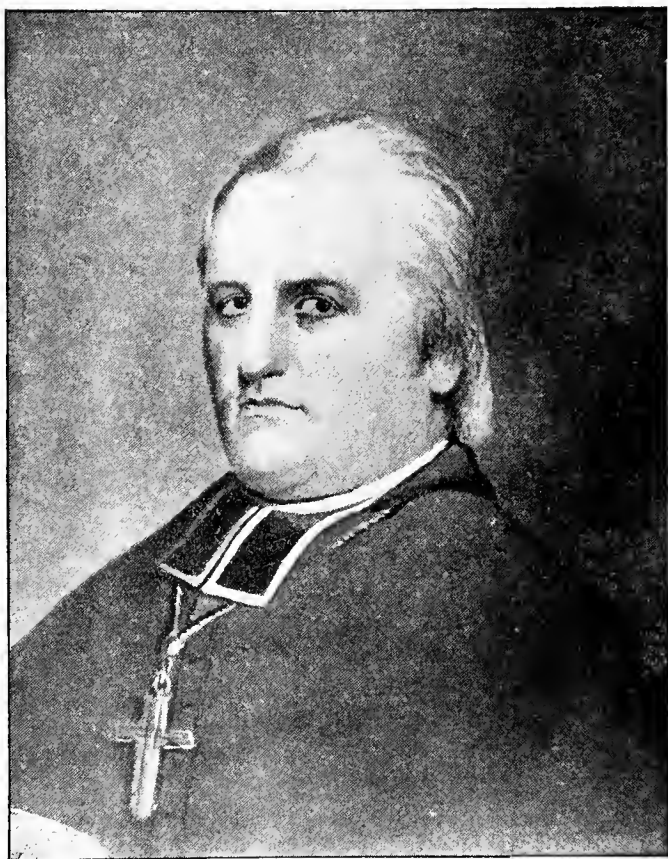
His death came home to Father MacEachern with a lively sense of personal loss. He loved the simple-minded, holy man, with whom he spent many a pleasant hour, when his duties would permit him to pay a visit to Tracadie. And now that he is gone forever, a feeling of utter loneliness steals over Father MacEachern, whose mind is ever

haunted by the picture of Father James' cheerless death-bed. He realizes that he too is getting up in years, and having no companion in the ministry, the possibility of dying without the rites of the Church swells the tide of his anxieties and fills his solitary life with sombre and painful forebodings.

Three years later Capt. John Macdonald followed Father Augustine to the tomb. Fortified by the Sacraments of Holy Church, and consoled by the untiring kindness of Father MacEachern, he passed away at Tracadie, in 1810, and was laid to rest at Scotch Fort.

In that quaint old cemetery he lies forgotten by the multitudes who are to-day in happy possession of the land he once claimed as his own. There he sleeps his last sleep, while round his lowly grave come and go the descendants of the people whose worldly destinies he once held in the hollow of his hand. Strange verdict of history ! In less than a century almost every trace of his influence has disappeared from the country wherein he played so important and so conspicuous a part. Few of his descendants remain, and of these all are not of the household of Faith. Such are the results wrought by Time's untiring hand. Nations rise and fall : families have their morning of growth, their noonday of greatness and their evening of senile decay. Individuals, too, share the common lot. They may seem to make an impression on the history of their country ; but it does not long endure. It speedily fades away like a foot-print on a sandy beach over which rolls the storm-lashed waters of the restless sea.

But above it all ever hovers the watchful Providence of God, without whose knowledge not even a sparrow falls to the ground ; and through it all shine the rays of the divine promise : " Behold I am with you all days even till the consummation of the world."



MOST REV. J. O. PLESSIS
Archbishop of Quebec
1806 - 1825

CHAPTER XVIII.

BISHOP PLESSIS VISITS PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

The obstacles that stood in the way of Father MacEachern's proposed visit to Quebec increased in number with the lapse of years. As time went by and no priest came to share his labours, the possibility of absenting himself from his post of duty became more and more remote, and his desire of meeting the Bishop seemed further and further from realization.

His Lordship, fully understanding the generous spirit that so bound the faithful priest to the service of the people, wrote him a letter in which he says that he has no hope of seeing him come to Quebec, at least until a priest is found to assist him in the missions of Prince Edward Island. "But," adds the Prelate, "as my worthy predecessor opened the way to your Island, I hope I shall not die before I pay you a visit, which will take place after all the inward parishes of the Diocese have been visited, which requires three years more."

Bishop Plessis had not yet seen this distant portion of his flock. His knowledge of their circumstances was derived from hearsay evidence or gleaned from letters written by missionaries residing in these parts. The scanty information thus obtained tended rather to excite the curiosity than satisfy the mind of the Prelate, and he therefore resolved to make a tour of the Maritime Provinces, so that by personal contact with the clergy and laity he might learn more of their respective conditions, and at the same time bestow on all the benefit of his episcopal ministrations. The diary kept by the Bishop during this pastoral journey is replete with interesting details. It

reveals a marvellous power of observation on his part, for nothing seemed to have escaped his notice, notwithstanding the manifold duties that absorbed his attention wheresoever he went. This diary is a most valuable document. It gives us a good insight into the condition of ecclesiastical affairs in this Island at that early date, and shall furnish us with the groundwork of one of the most interesting chapters in our history.

It was on the 12th of May, 1812, that Bishop Plessis set out from Quebec on this pastoral visit. He proceeded by carriage to Kamouraska, where he boarded a small schooner called the *Angélique* which was to convey him to the Gulf. The vessel carried a crew of three, viz: Capt. Aimé Dugast and two seamen. Accompanying His Lordship were two priests, Fathers Maguire and Beaubien, the latter of whom was destined as a helper to Father MacEachern in the missions of Prince Edward Island. An ecclesiastic not yet in Holy Orders, Mr. Xavier Côté, served in the capacity of chaplain or secretary to the Bishop. At Percé they were joined by another priest, Reverend Father Painchaud, whose knowledge of the Indian dialects they hoped to turn to good account during the course of the visit.

The missions of New Brunswick that bordered on the Gulf were visited in turn, and on the 30th of June, His Lordship is at Shediac, ready to cross over to Prince Edward Island. Here he expected to meet Father MacEachern, to whom he had written from Richibuctou some days previously, but for some reason, the latter was delayed and did not reach Father MacEachern till it was too late for him to start for Shediac in time to meet the Bishop.

Disappointed at not meeting him, His Lordship decided to make no delay, but proceed at once across the Strait and abide the chances of meeting with him in Prince Edward Island.

The *Angélique* accordingly set sail and made for Bedeque Bay, where they arrived next day. No sooner had Captain Dugast cast anchor, than he was hailed from a boat containing three men who were rapidly making their way to the vessel. Two of these were Acadians from Malpeque, the third was Father MacEachern. The latter was warmly welcomed by the Bishop and his companions. His

presence, indeed, could not fail to be of great service, for no one could be a better guide than he in those missions wherein he had labored for over twenty years. The Bishop's impressions of Father MacEachern he gives as follows: " Mr. MacEachern is familiar with every detail of the country. There is not a bay, a harbor, a cove, a point of land, a reef or a rock that he cannot point out, not a route by land with which he is not familiar, not a family Catholic or Protestant, French or Scotch, whose good and bad qualities have escaped his notice, not a property that he cannot value off hand.

" Having come from Scotland in 1790, with a number of his countrymen, he entered on the work of the ministry as soon as he received faculties from the Bishop of Quebec.

" Since then he has been untiring in his labours for the salvation of souls. The presence of Fathers De Calonne and Pichard in the colony gave him an opportunity of extending his labors to the Mainland, and he took advantage of the fact to bring the succors of religion to the Catholics of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island. Now that these priests are gone away, his activities are confined to the missions of the Island, as to do more would be impossible. The Scotch and Acadians praise his watchful care and devotedness. His conversation is that of a virtuous priest. He enjoys the esteem and respect of all classes, for whilst he is ever scrupulously exact in performing the duties of his sacred calling, he is no less mindful in observing the canons of politeness and good breeding.

" He was our joy and edification during the six weeks he accompanied us on the mission of this year."

The great Bishop and his humble priest had met at last. After years of earnest desire they had come together. Closer relations revealed new reasons for mutual esteem, so that the above magnificent testimony to the worth of Father MacEachern is not the sentimental extravagance of first impressions, but rather the spontaneous expression of an opinion long since formed, and now strengthened and confirmed by actual experience.

One of Father MacEachern's first duties on greeting the Bishop was to convey to him the compliments of Colonel Compton, who had

invited the entire party to make their home at the "Pavillion" during their stay at the mission. This was good news for the Bishop and clergy, who were growing tired of their accommodation aboard the *Angélique*. They were therefore happy to accept the kind invitation, and on the following day they disembarked and proceeded to the residence of Mr. Compton, where a kind and flattering welcome awaited them.

After a night spent in the enjoyment of the Colonel's generous hospitality, they were all much refreshed and in good spirits to enter on the serious work of the pastoral visit. On Friday, July 3rd, the religious exercises began in the old chapel already mentioned in these pages. It was a gala day for the people. The Acadians of Tignish, Cascumpec and Kildare came in great numbers to take part in the solemnities. These and the Indians of Lennox Island added to the people of Malpeque made up a congregation that far exceeded the capacity of the little church. All the priests were kept busy hearing confessions. Father Maguire heard the English speaking penitents, Father Beaubien had charge of the French, those who spoke only Gaelic addressed themselves to Father MacEachern, while the Micmacs eagerly crowded around Father Painchaud, when they learned that he could speak their language. A great number approached the Holy Table, and fifty-six received the sacrament of Confirmation.

The first thing to give the Bishop an unfavorable impression of Prince Edward Island was the poverty of the churches. Having left the interior of the Diocese, where ecclesiastical affairs were in a flourishing condition, he was astonished and even shocked at the utter destitution that prevailed in this part of his jurisdiction. We here insert his remarks on this subject. Whilst affording us a glimpse of the trying circumstances in which our forebears worshipped Almighty God, they should excite in our hearts a feeling of profound thankfulness for the changed conditions in which we have the happiness to live.

"In Canada (we translate from the Diary) we have little idea of the poverty of the Acadian chapels of Prince Edward Island, and no idea whatever of the utter destitution of the Scottish churches. Only a

priest brought up in Scotland would ever think of saying Mass in the like. In one, there are no altar-breads nor irons for making them, in another no missal. Here you find a chalice with a cup of gilded copper, there one entirely of tin. In most of churches there are neither cruets nor albs, nor chalices, nor altar-cloths, nor credence tables, nor surplices, nor ciboriums, nor holy water fonts, nor baptismal water. In the whole of Prince Edward Island, neither censer nor ostensorium has been seen within the memory of man.

“ A Scotch priest will preach, hear confessions and administer all the sacraments, dressed in citizen’s clothing, with an old ribbon that serves for a stole suspended from his neck. In bringing Holy Communion to the sick he puts this ragged stole in one pocket and the pyx containing the Sacred Host in another, and starts on his way conversing with this one, shaking hands with another and even spending the night in some house near his route, whose inmates are not aware that he is the bearer of a priceless treasure. If the sick person is very far distant, he goes provided with his portable altar, and says Mass near the bed of the patient who is thus enabled to receive Holy Communion. If any children are to baptized, he administers the sacrament in the house, with water specially blessed for the purpose.”

On the conduct of his priests the Bishop makes the following reflections :

“ This is one of the effects of religious persecution in Scotland. There priests were obliged to administer the sacraments in secret, and fearing they might be betrayed and condemned to death, they suppressed all the exterior forms of worship that were not strictly essential ; and now, though the persecutions have ceased, they still continue to exercise their functions in the same manner.

“ To the land of their adoption they have brought the same custom, and it is almost impossible to make them understand that more solemnity and decorum are really obligatory in a country where freedom of worship prevails.

“ Singing is as rare in their churches as ceremonies and vestments. And yet, wonderful to relate, the fervor of their faith surpasses all imagination.”

If Bishop Plessis was shocked by the destitution of the Scotch missions, he was at the same time astonished and edified by the lively faith of the people. Many times in his journal he makes mention of it. But did he grasp its true significance? Did he realize what a mine of sacrifice and devotedness lay hidden beneath? If the people had preserved the faith, they owed it, under God, to the heroic missionaries who risked all for their sake.

When persecution raged in Scotland, and a price was set on the head of every priest; when to say Mass or administer the Sacraments was tantamount to high treason, the clergy never deserted their post of duty, but labored in secret in the interest of our holy religion. Disguised in the garb of a peasant, or in the motley dress of a strolling bard, the priest took his life in his hands that his flock would not be deprived of the sacraments. Hidden by day in some dark cavern, and by night stealing from his unknown retreat to visit his flock, saying Mass for them in the deeper darkness that precedes the dawn, and hieing him to his concealment before the morning sun was risen, his whereabouts a profound secret, known only to a chosen few who would die rather than divulge it, his days spent ever under the dark shadow of a violent death: such was the life of sacrifice that served to keep alive the torch of divine faith amongst the sorely afflicted Highlanders.

And when many had fallen victims to their charity and the well-springs of priestly vocation seemed dried up by the savage conditions of the times, another race of heroes came from beyond the channel to the succour of the needy people. The ubiquitous Irish missionary appeared on the scene to devote himself to a cause consecrated by the labors and often by the blood of his Scottish kinsmen.

These holy men who thus saved the faith in the Highlands did not stop to inquire if their ministry had the approval of the civil authorities; they sought no passports from a government whose tyranny they had every reason to fear. No; they held their commission direct from Almighty God; their license was stamped with the seal of High Heaven, and they lost no time in bickering with State officials whilst souls were crying for bread and none to break it to them. This heroic

devotion to the cause of Christ won forever the hearts of the people. To them it counted for more than external forms and the solemn pomp of gorgeous ritual, and readily accounts for the fervor of the faith which excited the astonishment of Bishop Plessis.

The itinerary adopted by His Lordship the Bishop was exactly the reverse of the one followed by his predecessor in 1803. Having begun his labors at Malpeque, therefore, his next stopping-place was Rustico. Thither they proceeded in a large open boat which consumed eighteen tedious hours on the passage. Here the Bishop was pleased to find a new church and a parochial house wellnigh completed. The people, too, manifested the very best dispositions. They were, in fact, ready to execute any reasonable demands if they would be promised a resident pastor. The Bishop, therefore, resolved to leave Father Beaubien in charge of the mission, and enjoined upon the people that they finish the parochial house with all possible dispatch.

We may well picture to ourselves the joy of the people on hearing of the Bishop's intention. Nine years previously they had been deprived of their pastor for reasons that seemed scarcely sufficient to justify so drastic a proceeding. But now his place is about to be filled thanks to Bishop Plessis, whose treatment of the mission is in happy contrast to that it experienced at the hands of his predecessor.

Father Beaubien was the first Canadian priest to reside permanently in Prince Edward Island. His appointment to Rustico was a manifest proof that Quebec had at length awakened to a true sense of its responsibility in the matter of the Acadian people, who from this time forward were never entirely abandoned. Helpers were henceforth found for Father MacEachern, until the happy time when the first native Islander was raised to the priesthood and came to share the burden of the ministry in the land of his birth.

The religious exercises at Rustico occupied three days, and closed with the usual ceremonies on Thursday morning, July 9th. Father Painchaud then bade adieu to His Lordship and set out for Charlottetown. Here he found the *Angélique* lying at anchor in the harbor, and prevailed on Capt. Dugast to convey him to Shediac, whence the vessel returned in time to meet the Bishop at St. Andrew's.

Before taking leave of the people of Rustico, the Bishop drew up a number of rules and regulations to serve as a guide in the management of parochial affairs. He had already dwelt at some length on these points in the instructions he addressed to them during the exercises of the pastoral visit; but he deemed it more conducive to the end in view, to embody the same in a letter, which he ordered Father Beaubien to read publicly to the people; and which he was then to insert in the parish-book where it might be preserved for future reference.

This letter begins by reminding them that they have been preferred to all the other missions, since Father Beaubien has fixed his residence amongst them, and for this reason they should manifest a corresponding energy and punctuality in obeying the rules which His Lordship has deemed necessary to lay down for the welfare of the mission.

The first of these regulations referred to a plot of land of forty acres, bought by a number of the parishioners on August 7th, 1809. The purchase had been made by three persons, viz: John Gallant, Stephen Gallant and Joseph Martin, and though it was intended for a parochial farm, the title to the same had hitherto remained in the name of the three original purchasers. The Bishop now decides that the land must be at once given over to Father Beaubien, and that it is to be fenced in a suitable manner at the expense of the entire parish.

He next makes mention of the new parochial house, which is to be finished as soon as possible and put in proper order for the accommodation of the missionary. To the people of the present day it will appear strange that His Lordship found it necessary to insert the following paragraph relating to the new house. "They (the people) shall remember that the entire parochial house belongs to the missionary; and that they shall have no right to enter it, except when they have business with him."

Having thus provided for the speedy completion of the new house, His Lordship decides that its surroundings require some attention. He accordingly directs the people to fence in a courtyard wherein they are to erect a stable and sink a well for the use of the missionary.

Referring to the church he says that the five windows that are now wanting are to be procured as soon as possible and put in place during the coming autumn. The church-door is to be furnished with a lock, as is also the door of the Tabernacle, because henceforth it shall be the abode of the Real Presence.

To enable the church to defray its current expenses, His Lordship insists that pews be put in according as the people are directed to do so by Father Beaubien, which pews are to be sold at auction, the highest bid indicating the yearly rent the purchaser agrees to pay for the use of the same. The original purchasers shall continue to occupy their pews as long as they pay the rent, and at their death their widows succeed to their title and hold the same on the like condition as long as they do not remarry.

For the better convenience of pastor and people, and to enhance the splendor of external worship, the Bishop directs that a chancel twenty feet square be added to the church, for which they are to prepare the necessary materials during the winter, in order that the building operations may be begun early in the following spring.

In conclusion, reference is made to the old and new cemeteries. The former is to be properly closed in, and the latter now laid off by His Lordship is to be surrounded with a solid stone wall.

The above contains in substance Bishop Plessis' parting advice to the people of Rustico. It affords us an insight into the labors that awaited Father Beaubien, the first Canadian priest to assume charge of the mission.

Bishop Plessis and his companions left Rustico for St. Andrew's early in the morning of Friday, July 10th. They went by boat and landed at the head of Tracadie, near the home of Mrs. Capt. Macdonald, by whom they were hospitably entertained at dinner. After dinner the Bishop, accompanied by Fathers MacEachern and Maguire, started on foot for St. Andrew's, followed by Father Beaubien and Mr. Côté who travelled on horseback.

The church of St. Andrew's is thus described by the Bishop :

" Here is the chief residence of Father MacEachern, and the most important Scotch chapel on the Island. Like all the others it is a

wooden building ; but it is in good proportion and well finished on the outside. It has no steeple, and a cross was ordered to be placed at one end, as a mark of its sacred character. It contains galleries which are unfinished, benches with backs to them, and an altar of abnormal length. In other respects it is absolutely devoid of decoration, if we except one valuable painting imported from England, which represents Pilate delivering up the Son of God to be crucified."

As the exercises of the Pastoral visit were about to begin at St. Andrew's, Father Macdonald, of Arisaig, N. S., arrived on the scene. This was a most fortunate circumstance for Father MacEachern who would otherwise have been obliged to hear all the confessions, as the people could speak only Gaelic. Throughout Saturday and Sunday the exercises continued. Multitudes approached the Holy Table and sixty-six received the sacrament of Confirmation.

During his stay at St. Andrew's the Bishop had occasion to refer to certain abuses which he found prevailing amongst the people.

It seems that they were given to talking rather promiscuously in the church before and after service, as if the church were only a profane building. Dogs, too, frequented the holy place and ran about in perfect freedom.

The Lordship pointed out the incongruity of such conduct, and urged upon his hearers a greater respect for the House of God.

In this connection it may be well to recall the fact that these people had not been much accustomed to the use of churches until in recent years. For a long time they assisted at Mass in private houses, where, as soon as the voice of sacrifice was hushed into silence, the hum of ordinary conversation was set up, and when the usual business of the day followed closely upon the most solemn acts of divine worship. This may account in some measure for a custom that called forth a strong rebuke from Bishop Plessis, a custom, by the way, which still obtains to some extent in many congregations despite the advantages and so called enlightenment of the present day.

What particularly shocked the Bishop, and must prove a great surprise to our readers, was the immodesty in dress displayed by the women. We learn from His Lordship's diary that they came to receive

Holy Communion with their throats exposed to a degree that would merit their exclusion, not merely from the Holy Table, but even from the Church itself. The Bishop may have been over fastidious in this matter, for he admits that it might be attributed to the simplicity of the people, and we incline to the opinion that the evil in itself was not of much consequence, but appeared greater by comparison with the style of dress worn by the Acadian women of that time. The Prelate nevertheless inveighed strongly against the abuse and he assures us that a noticeable change for the better was at once effected.

These faults, however, were only minor ones and were completely eclipsed by the fervent faith and sincere devotion of the people. The Diary says "that they are as attached to their priest and as demonstrative in their piety as the Irish. At Mass you hear them sighing, and at the Elevation, they burst forth into sobs. They keep joining and separating their hands and striking their breasts so that their arms are in continual movement. Many remain prostrate with their face to the floor all through the sacrifice of the Mass. At the Communion men and women drag themselves on their knees to the altar rail, and in their ardor would reach the foot of the altar if no one would prevent them."

In this latter circumstance we can trace another effect of hearing Mass and receiving Communion for years at an improvised altar in private houses.

Having closed their labors at St. Andrew's, the Bishop and his companions boarded the *Angélique*, that lay at anchor as far up the river as Capt. Dugast would risk to go; and gliding down the peaceful Hillsborough, they arrived at Charlottetown Tuesday morning, July 14th.

In 1812 the capital of Prince Edward Island was a place of some pretension. Its site had been well chosen for strength, while for beauty it could not be excelled. Its wide streets, elegant private residences and imposing public buildings gave it an air of importance that excited the admiration of the Bishop.

It had an Anglican church, a new court-house, and barracks for

the soldiers, but no Catholic church, no parochial house, nor any of the requisites for the service of the altar.

The Bishop was forced to go to a hotel kept by a family named Bagnall, who proud of their distinguished guest, showered on him every kindness and attention. Here he was visited by all the principal citizens, amongst others by ex-Governor Fanning and Chief Justice Colglough. This latter gentlemen was so kind as to place the new Court House at the disposal of the Bishop for divine service. The workmen were still engaged in furnishing the interior, but it was soon cleared of all débris and put in good order, and the Bishop, profiting by the generosity of Mr. Colglough, said Mass in it on Thursday morning. His Lordship was all the more pleased with the opportunity, as on the previous morning he had been obliged to go to an inn ¹ kept by a Catholic family, for the purpose of offering the Holy Sacrifice. Taking advantage of the large congregation assembled in the Court House, the Bishop spoke to them of the necessity of providing themselves with a church. He bade them begin at once to collect funds for this purpose under the guidance of Father MacEachern. He expressed the hope that by next Spring they would have a church in process of construction, and chose for its Titular St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury. He directed that it should be built on a site donated for the purpose by Mrs. Calbeck, a wealthy Protestant widow, to whom he paid a personal visit in grateful recognition of her generosity. On Wednesday His Lordship called on Lieutenant Governor Des Barres, and on the following day he was the guest of ex-Governor Fanning. Many other invitations he was forced to decline, as time was pressing, and he felt that he must shorten his stay in Prince Edward Island and return to Quebec where business of importance demanded his presence.

The schooner with Capt. Dugast on board was lying at the Three Tides. The Commander of the garrison furnished a large boat manned by soldiers to convey the Bishop and suite to her side. On the wharf the Bishop bade adieu to Father Beaubien who was returning to his

1 — McPhee's, Dorchester street.

mission at Rustico. Towards evening the *Angélique*, having on board the Bishop, his secretary and Fathers Maguire, MacEachern and Macdonald, weighed anchor, sailed out the harbor and steered her course for Fortune Bay, where the Bishop was to bring to a close his visit of the Island missions. The night being fine and the wind favorable, they made a good passage and arrived at their destination on the following morning. This was the 17th of July, the Feast of St. Alexis, whom the Bishop at once selected to be the Titular of the little church. The choice, of course, was a mere coincidence ; but it would seem that the worthy Prelate must have had an eye to the fitness of things, when he chose a Saint who had been a beggar and outcast, to be patron of a church thus pictured in the Diary : “ The chapel is miserably built and unfinished ; its entire stock of ornaments consists of two candlesticks without a crucifix, and an antependium made of calico, on which are stamped pictures of children at play, sights more apt to cause distraction than inspire devotion.”

A great throng of people assembled at Fortune Bay to greet the Bishop. The inhabitants of Naufrage, East Point and Three Rivers were present in great numbers, and on Saturday night, the 18th July, every house in the settlement was crowded to its utmost capacity. Indeed, the small farm-houses were utterly inadequate to accommodate the multitudes assembled on the occasion, and some were forced to pass the night in the church, whilst others of more robust constitutions courted the drowsy god with the starry sky for a coverlet. Father MacEachern and Father Macdonald were kept very busy. Two little barns near the church served them for confessionals, and there they spent most of the time literally besieged by their penitents. The visit terminated on Monday morning, July 19th, after Confirmation had been administered to ninety-six persons.

Before taking leave of Fortune Bay, Bishop Plessis issued a Pastoral Letter addressed to Father MacEachern ; a part of which was intended for his own personal guidance, and a part to be communicated to the people. Among other things he enjoins on Father MacEachern the obligation of wearing a clerical dress as prescribed by the Council of Trent. To Father MacEachern he assigns the spiritual care of all the

Scotch missions throughout the Island, and to Father Beaubien that of all the Acadian missions. To equalize the payment of tithes to the two missionaries, the Island was divided into two sections by a line passing through Charlottetown. All to the east of Charlottetown, whether they were Scotch or Acadians, were directed to hand in their contributions to Father MacEachern, and Father Beaubien was to receive the offerings of all persons living to the west of said boundary line. The Pastoral insisted very strongly on the solemnities of exterior worship. It commanded Father MacEachern to put all the churches in better order, to see that were duly provided with vestments, bells and steeples.

For the future he is not to say Mass in private houses, except in cases of absolute necessity. This point was to be observed especially in Charlottetown, so that the people would be all the more eager to build a church. Then follow some instructions regarding confessions, baptisms, the receiving of converts into the Church, and other matters wisely laid down with a view to better discipline in all the missions.

At Fortune Bay, the labors of Bishop Plessis in Prince Edward Island came to an end. On the 21st of July, he crossed over to Cape Breton and resumed his Pastoral visitation at the mission of Cheticamp. Three weeks had he spent on Prince Edward Island; three weeks of unremitting application to duty, and it is safe to assert that seldom did any Bishop dispose of more business or patiently listen to more details of spiritual and temporal concerns than did Bishop Plessis in that interval of time. Wherever he went the people flocked to see him, and all came away feeling that they had knelt in the presence of one of God's saints. His kind and saintly manner won the hearts of all, and if on some occasions he was forced to condemn certain abuses, he never failed to clothe his censures in the graceful mantle of charity. The memory of his visit lingered long in the minds of the people. It was the subject of fireside conversation for many a day. The children retained vivid recollections of the happy day when they received at his hands the sacrament of Confirmation, and in their old age they loved to evoke, from the misty land of reminiscence, the impressions created in their young minds by the awe-inspiring mien of the venerable Prelate.

On his departure from Prince Edward Island he prevailed on Father MacEachern to accompany him to Cape Breton Island, and throughout the missions of the Gulf Shore as far as Pictou. Arrived at Pictou, he decided to return to Quebec at once and postpone till some more auspicious time his visit of the remaining missions of Nova Scotia.

In the month of June previous, war had been declared between the United States and Great Britain, and in consequence, Upper and Lower Canada were threatened with invasion. The Prelate therefore felt that his presence in his Cathedral City was vitally necessary, as weighty issues might arise at any moment demanding his personal attention. He accordingly suspended his visitation of the Maritime Provinces, and made his way back to Quebec by the shortest available route.

Before parting from Father MacEachern, the Bishop placed in his hands a second pastoral letter, bidding him translate the same into Gaelic and communicate its contents to the people of St. Andrew's, Naufrage and Three Rivers.

This Pastoral, dated at Pictou on August 12th, 1812, contains certain instructions concerning the payment of tithes, and regulates the stipends for High Masses and funeral services. It then enters into the question of supplying priests for the missions, of which subject His Lordship has this to say: "It is Our desire to inform you that, in our anxiety to provide you with priests, We have directed Father MacEachern to take up collections in the missions, the proceeds of which shall be devoted to the education of some of your sons for the ministry. We know that you have already contributed towards this object, and We earnestly hope that you may continue to do so in future. We have directed Father MacEachern to make choice of two boys, between the ages of twelve and fifteen years, and send them to Quebec to begin their studies in one of Our colleges."



REV. J. L. BEAUBIEN

CHAPTER XIX.

FATHER BEAUBIEN AT RUSTICO.—SICKNESS OF THE PEOPLE.—ACADIANS
OF MALPEQUE MOVE FURTHER WEST.

The years that followed the visit of Bishop Plessis were marked by steady progress in the ecclesiastical affairs of Prince Edward Island. Father MacEachern was no longer alone in the work of the ministry : a helper had been found for him, the Reverend Jean-Louis Beaubien, to whom had been entrusted the care of the Acadian missions. He was also charged with the missions of the Magdalen Islands, where the people did not enjoy the benefit of a resident priest. The Indians, too, formed no inconsiderable part of his scattered flock, and helped to swell the tide of labors and anxieties that fell to his lot. The following letter written at Arisaig by Bishop Plessis, during the course of his Pastoral visit, will show what arrangements he had deemed fit to make in the interest of this latter people.

“ To Mr. Jean-Louis Beaubien, Missionary.

Sir,

“ The Indians dispersed along the shores of Pictou and Merigomish having no fixed residence, may go to your mission to receive instruction and approach the Sacraments. In remuneration for your services, and for the sake of proper discipline, you may exact a half dollar per year from each communicant and head of family. Let them not come seeking your services in every place where you may happen to be,

but only at Lennox Island, and see that you duly inform them of the time they can find you at the latter place. You may, until further orders, do likewise with any who may chance to come from Newfoundland. But those of Cape Breton Island must address themselves to Mr. Lejantel, those of Pomquet to Mr. Pichard, and those of Richibouctou to Mr. Gagnon.

“ In the meantime try earnestly to learn the Micmac. The more I travel, the more am I convinced that a knowledge of their language is necessary for those who have spiritual charge of those poor people. If they have been neglected and abandoned in the past, it is owing in a great measure to the fact that the missionaries could not speak to them in their own tongue.”

With this programme of arduous labour before him, Father Beau-bien took up his residence at Rustico. His rule was to pay two regular visits to each mission of Prince Edward Island every year, and during the summer, to cross over to the Magdalen Islands, where he would remain several weeks at a time. Indeed, his stay would sometimes be prolonged beyond all expectation, before chance would place in his way a suitable means of return. If we add to this his frequent calls to the sick and other necessary journeys, we will readily understand that he had but little time to enjoy the leisure of home life at Rustico. A letter written to the Bishop of Quebec, October 7th, 1812, furnishes some details of his early experience in his new sphere of duty.

“ A few days after my arrival,” he writes, “ I was called to Malpeque, to visit a Micmac woman who was lying ill, and I profited by the occasion to hold a station in the settlement. On my return to Rustico, I devoted a few days to getting some work done to my new house. I then started for Tignish and its neighbouring settlements, and got back only a few days ago. I found places where the people are very good; but in some others, they are bad enough. I trust, by the aid of God’s grace, that these may change for the better.

“ In a few days I start for Fortune Bay, whence I hope to make my way to the Magdalen Islands. This, however, is rather doubtful, as every one says I shall not be able to reach there this fall. When

I get to East Point, I shall be able to tell. If I don't go this autumn, I will do so early in the spring, unless I fall into the hands of the Americans."

Father Beaubien's first winter in Prince Edward Island was one of unusual severity. Much sickness likewise prevailed throughout the missions, and the two priests were kept busy attending the sick and dying. Fortunate it was that Father MacEachern had a companion to share with him the hardship of that trying time; for otherwise it would have been impossible for him to attend so many sick people, and not a few would probably have died without the rites of the Church. Father Beaubien, in one of his letters, makes mention of the hardships experienced both by priests and people during the rigors of that dreary season.

"We have had," he writes "a terrible winter for frost and snow and sickness, which caused us many journeys, and which carried off twelve persons in Rustico alone. I believe it was the Good Lord Himself who, in the end, put a stop to it." The prevalence of sickness must have spread terror among the people, for he adds: "The people of the Magdalen Islands have not yet come over for me: they are afraid of catching the disease."

Father MacEachern, whose eastern missions were sadly decimated by the epidemic, thus describes his experiences of it: "On the 7th of January, I went to visit a sick man from this Town (Charlottetown) through the woods to Lot 14 in one day. A few days after, I was called to Egmont Bay, returned then to Malpec, and after having confessed such of our people as live around the Bay, I returned to Mr. Beaubien's château at St. Augustine's in the middle of February. From that time till the middle of June, I seldom slept two nights in the same bed. A raging fever resembling a pleurisy carried off many of our people. I went eight times to Three Rivers, and always in the winter, by Lot 44 across to St. Alexis and along the bays. The snow was never known so deep and the weather so severe. There was not a settlement east of Rustico where the sickness did not spread. It is a good thing in such distress to be descended of the sons of Fingal."

This epidemic seems to have continued its deadly work among the people for several years, for three years later, Father MacEachern writes as follows : “ There has not passed a winter these four years past, but we have been visited with pleuritic fevers ; consequently, my confrère and myself have been kept marching and countermarching almost constantly.”

This reason alone, even if no other existed, would have rendered it exceedingly difficult to carry out the instructions of Bishop Plessis, regarding the exterior management of the missions. The improvements suggested in his letters would entail considerable work even in the most favorable circumstances ; but amid the hardships of the times, the sickness of the people, the frequent journeys of the missionaries, and their short and uncertain stay in any particular place, it is not surprising that the work proceeded slowly, and that the changes, so urgently demanded by His Lordship, proved somewhat tardy in realization.

That such was Father Beaubien's experience we learn from one of his letters written at Rustico, Sept. 22nd, 1813 : “ I have informed Your Lordship,” it goes on to say, “ that our work is progressing, and it continues to do so, though not without trouble. Many are negligent in handing in their contributions and furnish poor excuses for their negligence. I have threatened several times to complain to Your Lordship, and have even gone so far as to say that they would not be admitted to the sacraments unless they would do better. Since then I find some improvement, and I hope it may prove lasting. I do not bring these matters to Your Lordship's notice for the purpose of inducing you to exercise the rigors of your episcopal authority over these people. No, I would not wish to have recourse to such harsh measures, because there are too many good people amongst them. All I ask is that Your Lordship say something in your next letter that I may read to them, as well as to those in my other missions who are guilty of a like negligence.”

About a year later, he again refers to the subject and has this to say of it : “ We are not as far advanced as Your Lordship would perhaps desire. But it is not the fault of the parish. I believe that

all are doing their best. The real cause of the delay is my frequent visits to the other missions, the prevalence of sickness and the inactivity of our workmen, who are by no means as diligent as they ought to be."

In his business relations with the people, Father Beaubien seems to have been a striking counterpart of Father MacEachern. He was apt to be somewhat indulgent in money matters, and on that account preferred to let things go more slowly, rather than put the people to much inconvenience by being harsh and exacting in his demands. To some this may appear a questionable disposition in a priest entrusted with the administration of the finances of a parish; nor do we presume to raise here or much less to solve the question whether or not it is better to be rigorously exacting in these matters. We think, however, that if we go back to the years of which we write, and contemplate the condition of affairs that obtained at that time, we will hesitate before accusing our pioneer missionaries of remissness in this particular. For the Bishop who had paid only one visit to the country, and who, in consequence, possessed but very imperfect knowledge of the true inwardness of the case, it was an easy matter to condemn existing conditions and lay down rules and establish regulations regarding the future of the missions. But for the missionaries who lived on the spot, the question had a widely different aspect. They understood every phase of the people's circumstances. They were brought in daily contact with the most touching evidence of their poverty and destitution. They themselves bore a large share of their wants and privations, and we cannot wonder then, that the good priests were moved to pity and regarded their flock with a spirit of patient indulgence. We who live in this age of material prosperity may condemn this as a weakness and want of energy; but those who seek in all things the greater glory of God cannot fail to admire the spirit that prompted Father Beaubien to write: "We have not advanced much in our work. My occupations and the poverty of the people is the reason why I have not pressed them too much."

Whilst the people of Rustico were thus providing a suitable place of worship for themselves, the mission of Malpeque was in a state

of hopeless confusion. The disagreement between the people and Colonel Compton, to which we referred elsewhere, instead of diminishing with the lapse of time, acquired greater proportions. A compromise had been attempted in 1812, when the Colonel made a proposition to his tenants, by which he offered them a long lease of their lands at what he considered a reasonable figure, but which they considered so high that they refused to entertain the proposal. When Father Beaubien paid his first visit to the mission in the fall of 1812, he found the proprietor and the people so inflamed against each other that he thought fit to inform the Bishop of the misunderstanding. He accordingly wrote : " The people of Malpeque are as they were when Your Lordship visited the settlement. Mr. Compton is much displeased with them, especially with Mr. Placide Gaudet, who refused to go about the parish on Sunday during High Mass and Vespers, in which refusal he was right. The Colonel went so far as to say that he would stop the Mass altogether, and made some other nonsensical threats, unless they came to terms, but nothing has come of it thus far. Nevertheless I believe the unfortunate people will finally move elsewhere."

Father Beaubien's predictions proved only too true. The people decided to leave Malpeque, and move further to the westward where they hoped to procure lands on more favorable terms. On the 4th of September, 1813, he again refers to their unsettled condition in a letter to the Bishop of Quebec. " I have done nothing at Malpeque," he writes ; " the people stand with Mr. Compton as they did a year ago. Many are leaving the mission and others are preparing to follow."

Another grievance under which they labored was the troublesome conduct of their Protestant neighbors. These were principally English settlers, who had come from England to Prince Edward Island at the request of Colonel Compton. They had no sooner arrived at Malpeque than they began to look with covetous eyes on the beautiful farms cleared by the industry of the Acadians, and were not slow to profit by the unhappy circumstances of the latter to come into easy possession of their holdings. Taking advantage of the mutual distrust between the landlord and his tenants, as well as of the innate

fear with which the Acadians regarded the English, the new comers so played on the feelings of this simple-minded people as to render their lives very uncomfortable.

A tradition still lingering among the Acadians relates how one of the original tenants of Colonel Compton, named Joseph Arsenault ¹, on returning home from his work on a certain evening, found a notice posted on his barn-door, threatening him with violence if he did not immediately vacate the premises. The notice was stuck through with the tines of a hay-fork, and set forth that the owner of the barn would be in danger of similar treatment should he delay his departure.

Mr. Arsenault was a man of considerable influence in the community. He was in a certain sense a leader amongst his countrymen. Fearless in upholding their rights and outspoken in condemning their wrongs, he stood in the way of English aggression, and obstructed these covetous new comers in their efforts to obtain possession of the fertile farms of the Acadians. It was necessary therefore that they get him out of the way, and he was accordingly singled out for the above mentioned display of hostility.

Such strained relations could not long endure. The condition of the Acadians was fast becoming intolerable; so they determined to abandon their holdings and go elsewhere to seek homes wherein they might dwell in peace and security.

Father MacEachern learned of their intention during a visit he paid to the Catholics of Lot 14, and immediately brought their case to the notice of the Bishop of Quebec. "I am sorry to hear," he writes, "that the poor Acadians of Lot 17 are to remove to Egmont Bay, on Lot 15. It is said that their neighbors are troublesome to them in spirituals and temporals where they are."

For these reasons the French people residing around St. Eleanor's moved further westward and took up land at Egmont Bay and along the shores of Fifteen Point. At Egmont Bay they soon put up a small log church, thus laying, in a humble and unpretentious manner, the foundation of the present prosperous parish of St. James. Here

1 — Nicknamed "Joe League and a half."

they reared new homes in the forest, and amid untold privations, labored to support themselves and their families.

It were a dreary story to narrate all the hardships that fell to their lot, especially during their first years in the new settlements. It was the history of Acadia repeating itself, when those persecuted people, driven by the greed and rapacity of a stronger race, abandoned their comfortable homes and fertile fields, and went forth to begin life anew amid the hardships and uncertainties of the wilderness. But their confidence in God never wavered. Father Beaubien visited them and said Mass in their little chapel as often as his manifold duties permitted, and soon the sun of prosperity rose clear and bright over the horizon and gilded their future with the blessed rays of hope and promise.

CHAPTER XX.

AFFAIRS IN CHARLOTTETOWN.—CLERICAL DRESS.—THE CANCER REMEDY.

At this stage of our history it is necessary to take a glance at the condition of affairs in Charlottetown. The Catholic portion of its population had been ordered by Bishop Plessis to provide themselves as soon as possible with a suitable place of worship; but it seems that they were as dilatory in obeying the command as the people of the country missions.

A letter written by Father MacEachern, in the autumn of 1813, contains the following reference to this matter: "From the sickly state of the country and the difficulty of procuring boards we have not done anything as yet towards building our chapel in Charlottetown. The first subscription (on paper) amounts to £90." Things went on in this way somewhat longer, for in March, 1815, he again writes: "The sickly state of the country, the want of a good situation, the small number of Catholics in Charlottetown, and various other reasons prevented our building a chapel before now in this place." One of the reasons here advanced for the delay was the want of a good site for the proposed new church. Father MacEachern would not be satisfied with an inferior one when there was question of building a place of worship in an important centre like Charlottetown. He therefore preferred to wait until a site was available in a suitable place.

In this connection our readers may remember that a certain Mrs. Calbeck had offered a plot of land for the purpose, and in return for

her generosity, had been honored with a visit of the Bishop of Quebec during his stay in Charlottetown in 1812. Whether this offer was afterwards withdrawn or that the land was found unsuitable we cannot say, but certain it is, it was not used as a site for the church, and from that time we hear no more of it. In the autumn of 1812, Mr. John Brecken, a merchant of Charlottetown, offered Father MacEachern a plot of land lying between the residence of Governor DesBarres and the Anglican church. Though touched by the generosity of the donor, Father MacEachern did not find the situation to his liking, but writes the Bishop that he hopes to be able to exchange it for a more central one. Soon the very site he had in view, and which of all others was unquestionably the most desirable, was thrown on the market, and the prudent priest lost no time in securing it. It was described as Lot No. 77 in the first hundred of town-lots in Charlottetown, and lay at the south-west angle formed by the intersection of Great George and Sydney Streets, where rises to-day in solemn grandeur the imposing façade of St. Dunstan's Cathedral. It was the property of a certain Christopher Hartell, a shoemaker, who released the same to the church, by a deed bearing date Oct. 25th, 1815. As soon as the bargain was made, Father MacEachern informed the Bishop of the fact by a letter in which he says: "We bought a lot opposite to Governor Fanning's, on the best eminence in Charlottetown, for £75.0.0, of which I paid £10.0.0 myself. We mean to build on it right away."

The Catholic people who live in Charlottetown to-day have just reason to appreciate the foresight displayed by Father MacEachern, in selecting a site for the new church. Like a prudent man of the world, he read the signs of the times and formed his plans not only with a view to present conditions, but also with a careful regard for future necessities. He foresaw that Charlottetown would one day be a place of importance, and furnish grand possibilities for the activities of Holy Church. In this respect the future was not entirely hidden from him, for he instinctively felt that the Church, despite her many disadvantages, would be able to keep pace with her more fortunate environment, and stamp the impress of her God-given energy on the

community in which she had hitherto been almost a stranger. What joy would have been his, had the veil been entirely lifted, so that he might catch a glimpse of the distant day, when the modest church he is now to build gave place to a magnificent cathedral, whose majestic spires spring heavenward from the very spot which, in our day as in his, is "the best eminence in Charlottetown."

Although building operations were long delayed, and for excellent reasons, still we must not conclude that the spiritual wants of the people of Charlottetown were entirely neglected. Father MacEachern went amongst them as often as possible, and Father Beau-bien occasionally came from Rustico to visit them. During those years Mass was usually said in the parlor of a house of entertainment kept by Donald MacPhee, whose wife, originally a Protestant, had been converted to the Faith by the Abbé De Calonne. Mr. MacPhee and his amiable wife were famed far and near for their hospitality. The house in which they lived, whose doors were ever open to friend and stranger alike, still stands on the north side of Dorchester street a little east of Pownal street¹. Here the people would assemble when they learned of Father MacEachern's arrival in the town, and here he was subjected to the same routine of duties which marked his visits to the country missions.

Mr. MacPhee died in November, 1812, and Father MacEachern attended his funeral with ex-Governor Fanning and other notables of Charlottetown. This was the first time that Father MacEachern had appeared publicly in a clerical dress. Hitherto, he had gone about, shewing no distinctive mark of his sacred calling, but wearing the dress of an ordinary layman. His clothes were usually of dark home-spun cloth, woven by one of his sisters-in-law, and fulled by an old-fashioned process long since gone out of use. This was another case of laying aside external forms, as was the custom in Ireland and in the Highlands of Scotland, so as not to attract the attention of the civil authorities. Up to this time, Father MacEachern had not been officially recognized by the authorities of the day. He was allowed

1— Now occupied by Mr. Andrew Sullivan.

to go his way unmolested, and thanks to the generous spirit of toleration that characterized the Governors of that time, he suffered no inconvenience in the discharge of his clerical duties. But if he had applied to the Government for a passport or any legal recognition, as the French clergy had done, he might have met with a refusal, and be perhaps subjected to other annoyances. He chose the more apostolic way of going about the Master's business, without leave or license from any earthly power. He avoided, however, as much as possible, all conflict with the civil authorities, by making as little outward display of his clerical character as was consistent with his calling, and smoothing over the difficulties of his position, not by legal forms nor Government parchments, but by the silent argument of the good which he accomplished. To the people whom he served his style of dress was of little consequence. They knew him to be a true Apostle and a worthy servant of the Divine Master. They felt that he touched their spiritual interests at every vital point, and it is doubtful if he could have been more revered or more beloved in the gorgeous robes of a Roman Prelate than in his homely garb scarcely superior to the "hodden grey" of the Scottish peasant.

But when Bishop Plessis bade him wear the clerical dress, then a change became a conscientious duty. Whatever delay might occur in directing the people to carry out episcopal instructions, in matters where he alone was personally concerned, prompt obedience was his watchword. He, therefore, at the Bishop's request, put aside his lay attire to don that of the ecclesiastic, and informed his Superior of the change in these words: "I got my uniform as well done as that of Mr. Beaubien, and assisted publicly in my clerical habit at the funeral obsequies of Mr. MacPhee (with Governor Fanning and several others of our noblesse), in Charlottetown, about two weeks ago."

Another matter to which his attention was called by Bishop Plessis was the necessity of providing vestments and other requisites for the different missions. This he was now trying to accomplish as faithfully and speedily as the circumstances of the time would allow.

Goods shipped to Prince Edward Island during these years were

in danger of being lost or destroyed at sea. Since the declaration of war between Great Britain and the United States, privateers of the latter country continually patrolled the waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence in search of British shipping. The following incident which occurred at that time shows that church goods were not considered contraband of war, but received a fair measure of respect when fallen into hostile hands.

Michael MacDonald, of Judique, Cape Breton, a brother-in-law of Father MacEachern, was returning home from Quebec on a certain occasion with a valuable cargo of merchandise. As he entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence, he descried in the distance a large ship whose proximity caused him some uneasiness. Michael at once divined that it was a hostile frigate, and forthwith spread all canvass to make good his escape. This however proved impossible.

The Yankee was a good sailer and speedily bore down on the merchant-ship. When he came within range he opened fire, and the luckless Michael soon saw his mainmast go by the board. Nothing remained but to surrender, which he did with the best possible grace. When the Yankees boarded their prize, they found on deck two large boxes stamped with the name of Father MacEachern, and on inquiry, they learned that these contained vestments and other things destined for the service of the altar.

They accordingly transferred them to their own ship together with MacDonald and his crew. The captured vessel with the remainder of the cargo was then set on fire and destroyed before the eyes of the owner, who thus lost in a few hours the earnings of several years. The crew, however, were treated with kindness and were landed safely on Prince Edward Island, together with the boxes containing the vestments and sacred vessels.

At the time of which we write physicians were few in Prince Edward Island and medical attendance was hard to procure. This circumstance added not a little to the labors of the good priest. Often, indeed, was he called to the bedside of the sick, not alone that he might cheer the afflicted one with spiritual consolation, but also because his wide experience led people to suppose that he must have met

cases of a similar nature, and, therefore, knew some effectual remedy for the same. One of the most prevalent and fatal maladies of the time was cancer. Among the earlier settlers it was frightfully common. Whether it was owing to the hardships and exposure they had to endure, or the severe climatic conditions they experienced in the new country, or the coarse food upon which they generally subsisted, it is difficult to say; but its ravages were exceedingly great, and many were the victims it claimed as its own. Speaking to Bishop Plessis in 1812, Father MacEachern mentioned this matter, and learned that for some years a remedy had been used in Quebec which had produced marvellous results in the treatment of this loathsome disease.

As soon as the Bishop returned to his Cathedral City, Father MacEachern wrote him a letter, requesting him to procure a copy of the recipe and forward the same to Prince Edward Island without delay. The Bishop did so, and thus was introduced into this Island the famous "cancer plaster," so highly prized a generation ago. Father MacEachern singled out a few reliable persons throughout the Island to whom he felt the use of the remedy might be safely entrusted, and these in turn handed it down to others, who served to perpetuate its use even to our day. Father MacEachern himself applied it in many instances and apparently with good results, for writing to Bishop Plessis, on March 31st, 1815, he says: "I have cured three persons of cancer by the violent remedy."

The physicians of the present day eschew this old-fashioned remedy and have recourse to the surgeon's knife; but it is yet doubtful if any method of theirs has proved more successful in combating this dread disease, than the old "cancer plaster" when applied by a competent person.

CHAPTER XXI.

DIFFICULTIES WITH GOVERNOR SMITH.

Mention has already been made of Father MacEachern's relations with the civil authorities of Prince Edward Island. With the leading men he lived on terms of friendship, and if nothing positive was done to mitigate the rigors of the Penal Laws, still he enjoyed a fair measure of toleration, and could go his way and work out his plans undisturbed and unmolested by the officials of the day.

It is a noteworthy fact that prior to 1813 no Governor of Prince Edward Island took advantage of his high position to hamper the Catholic clergy in their work of saving souls. On the contrary, the relations between priests and governors were always of the kindest nature. Each seemed actuated, not by pride of position but by mutual respect and good will. Governor Patterson was a warm personal friend of Father James, and frequently had the humble priest a guest at his table. General Fanning lived on terms of the closest intimacy with Father MacEachern, and shared his joy when Fathers De Calonne and Pichard came to relieve the tedium of his missionary life. Governor Des Barres manifested the same good dispositions when the Acadians applied for permission to introduce a French priest into the colony. Not only did he place no obstacles in the way of the priest who was to come, but he was even ready to extend to him the hand of welcome and clothe him with the mantle of his kindly protection. All three were men much in advance of the age in which they lived, men who could rise superior to prejudice, and look beyond the narrow horizons of sect and denomination in dealing

with the people. Keenly alive to the wants of the new Colony, they were ever glad to welcome the cooperation of the priest, whose position in the community made him not merely the recognized leader of religious thought, but also a most powerful factor in building up a healthy public sentiment amongst the people whom he served.

But in 1813 a change took place in this respect. In the summer of that year Governor Des Barres, who had reached his eighty-sixth year, retired from office and was succeeded by Mr. Charles Douglas Smith.

The new Governor was a man of most arbitrary disposition. His views ran counter with those of almost all the people, who came under the sphere of his influence, and consequently his long term of office was an unbroken series of petty quarrels with the people and their representatives.

It seems that the immunity in matters of religion hitherto enjoyed by Father MacEachern and the Catholic population was not pleasing to His Excellency, and accordingly he signalized his assumption of office by a striking example of bigotry and narrow-minded prejudice.

Shortly after his arrival he sent Father MacEachern the following letter :

“ Private Secretary’s Office,

“ Charlottetown, August 17th, 1813.

“ Sir,

“ By command of His Excellency the Governor I have to inform you that all marriages solemnized by you without first having obtained a license from under the hand and seal of the Governor, will be notified as null and void and of no effect in law.

“ I remain, Sir,

“ Your most obedient humble servant,

“ C. M. TOWNSHEND,

“ Private Secretary.

“ Rev. ANGUS MACEachern,

“ St. Andrew’s.”

Father MacEachern took very little notice of this communication which he characterized as a "penny-paper" of "obnoxious dye." He continued to exercise all his functions as before, and was prepared, if matters came to the worst, to send all persons who wished to marry over to Nova Scotia, where a more broad-minded and enlightened Governor held office, and where Catholics could receive the sacrament of Matrimony without let or hindrance from the civil authorities.

The bigotry of Governor Smith did not stop here. A short time after his arrival on the Island he struck off from the commission of the Peace the only two Catholics who held the position. One of these, Major Macdonald of the West River, was a man of such standing in the community that his dismissal created universal regret, in which Father MacEachern largely shared, as we see by the following extract taken from one of his letters to the Bishop of Quebec. "I think I was hardly ever in worse humor than at the time of writing my last. I told Your Lordship how I was used by our Governor. The treatment that Major Macdonald of West River received has given offence not only to Catholics, but also to all those who know the Major. He is unquestionably one of the most respectable and unexceptionable characters on this Island. He came here in 1771, returned to Scotland and came back in 1772. At the commencement of the American war he entered the service, followed the King's fortune until the conclusion of the said war; retired on half pay from the 84th of Foot, and was employed as Captain in Fencible Corps on this Island until the Peace of Amiens. He was dismissed from the office of Justice of the Peace for no other reason, but because he marked himself with the sign of the Son of Man. His nephew, Capt. Alexander Macdonald, who was a Lieutenant in the Highland regiment of volunteers ten years ago, was struck off the list of the Peace because he raised up his hand to cross and bless himself."

Whatever his own personal feelings may have been, Father MacEachern did not wish to make an outward show of displeasure, and would not permit his flock to manifest any resentment for the unkind treatment meted out to them by the Governor. He accordingly writes :

“ We say nothing, and this day I cautioned my people to pay no attention whatever to any insult of this kind.” As war was going on at the time he felt that his people might be called upon at any time to defend His Majesty’s possessions in America, and he rejoiced to think that neither bigotry nor persecution would cause them to swerve from their duties as loyal subjects. “ Our people ”, he writes, “ I am convinced, if an occasion should offer, will be the first in pursuit and the last in retreat.”

Governor Smith soon found out that Father MacEachern was not a man to be intimidated in matters where the authority of the Church was concerned ; and consequently the prohibitory order regarding the solemnization of marriages soon became a dead letter. “ I heard no more of the license question ”, wrote Father MacEachern about two years afterwards, “ and matters remain as they were.” The Governor even wished to deny that he had sent a letter forbidding him to marry persons without license ; or, if he did not deny it directly, he at least tried to give to it a meaning different from the one which it was calculated to convey. This change of tactics on the part of His Excellency was due in a great measure to a lengthy conversation that passed between Father MacEachern and Mr. Holland, the Commissary General, on the subject.

Mr. Holland no doubt faithfully reported to the Governor the views of Father MacEachern, and this afforded His Excellency a clearer knowledge of the man with whom he had to deal, and the importance to him as a Catholic priest of the question at issue.

This conversation has been substantially preserved to us, and it goes to show how Father MacEachern viewed the situation, and how he could give expression to his sentiments when the circumstances were such as to demand plain speaking. He began by pointing out to Mr. Holland the important part played by the Catholics of Prince Edward Island during the American War of Independence. He emphasized their unswerving loyalty to the King’s cause at a time when every inducement was held out to them to join the revolutionary standard. How will these Catholics, Scotch and French, he asks, who at this very moment are defending the rights of King and country

with their best blood, assisted by only a small number of regular troops, how will they relish this insult thrown at their Faith at such an unseasonable hour ?

Very decidedly he told Mr. Holland that in his ecclesiastical capacity he would pay no attention to the Governor's letter. Marriage, he strongly insisted, being a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ, it is beyond the power of the civil authority to declare it null and void.

An argument that must have surprised the Governor, but which holds good in our day as well as in 1813, is the following. He argued that if marriages solemnized by the Catholic clergy were null and void, then the marriages of the ancestors of the present Protestant generation must have been null and void ; because they were all Catholics up till the time of the Reformation and many of them for long years after. How then can the present generation, he asks, lay claim to property which they inherit solely on the ground that all such marriages were valid and binding in law ?

The Governor's action, therefore, was calculated to call in question not only all cases of Catholic inheritance, but it also created doubt of the legality of titles in a multitude of Protestant possessions. He concluded by reminding Mr. Holland of the existing state of affairs in the Colony. War was raging, and union of all interests was necessary for the welfare of the country. Hence he said : " Such doctrine was undoubtedly sowing the seed of distrust among His Majesty's subjects at a time when every nerve should be strained to unite us together to repel all the attacks of our foes."

This in substance was Father MacEachern's answer to the Governor's letter, and it shows how faithfully he adhered to the policy of firmness and moderation according to the advice of the Bishop of Quebec, as contained in the following extract from one of his letters. The Bishop, apprised of Governor Smith's conduct, thus wrote to Father MacEachern ! " Just as we must be prompt to obey the civil authorities in all matters that fall under their jurisdiction ; so must we be firm in following our own principles in religious affairs. Hence, let the consequences be what they may, you must continue to solem-

nize the marriages of the people in your missions." And Father MacEachern did follow his own principles fearlessly but prudently, notwithstanding the Governor's injunction to the contrary. In a few years the matter died out, as we glean from a letter of Father MacEachern, dated October 5th, 1818, in which he says: "Governor Smith showed me a copy of a letter he wrote last summer, or summer was a year, to the Colonial Minister regarding the mode of and by whom marriages were performed within this Colony. He observed that he knew not how marriages were celebrated by the Catholic clergymen, but believed with as much if not more solemnity than by those of the Established Church, and that he did not concern himself about the matter as far as it regarded Catholics. So far well. We will keep quiet. I spoke very freely but modestly to His Excellency on this and other public matters, for which he thanked me and told me, if I refused marriage (which I often do) to stragglers, to let him know, so that they might not surreptitiously obtain a license of marriage from him.

"I am convinced he repents having written a foolish letter at one time on this subject."

This was the end of the unpleasantness, thanks to the firm and dignified conduct of Father MacEachern. No one more than he respected the civil authorities or bowed more submissively to the laws of the land; but when an effort was made to extend the civil authority beyond its jurisdiction, and put in force regulations impinging on the rights and liberties of Holy Church, he pursued his way inflexible in the right and refused to be coerced into submission.

It was the first real conflict between Church and State in this Colony, and by the uncompromising attitude of Father MacEachern and the sound sense of succeeding Governors, it was destined to be the last.

CHAPTER XXII.

FIRST ECCLESIASTICAL STUDENTS.

One of the first duties to claim the attention of Father MacEachern after he parted from Bishop Plessis, was to seek out two young boys whom he should send to Quebec to be educated for the priesthood. His choice fell on Ronald Macdonald, of Priest Pond, King's Co., and Bernard Donald Macdonald, of St. Andrew's. They took passage at New London, in a vessel bound for Quebec, and arrived at their destination in the month of October 1812. On the 2nd of November Bishop Plessis mentions their arrival as follows: "Your two boys, Ronald and Donald Macdonald, have arrived without money, having been put aboard ship at New London by Mr. Beaubien. They are now in the Seminary where their education will receive special care. You may assure their parents that all their wants have been supplied. I have advanced them what they needed in the hope that you will send me, some way or other, the one hundred and fifty pounds. I am waiting for arrival of the two children of Widow Macdonald, of Tracadie. I long to see Roderick especially of whom you have spoken so highly."

The two boys, Ronald and Donald Macdonald, were selected by Father MacEachern to meet the views expressed by Bishop Plessis, in the Pastoral referred to in Chapter XVIII. They were the first of a long line of students sent from Prince Edward Island to the Seminary of Quebec, the first fruits of the long and determined efforts of Father MacEachern to obtain for his flock a succession of clergymen.

A critical examination of the letters that passed between Father

MacEachern and Bishop Plessis, during the decade of years that followed the arrival of those two boys in Quebec, reveals to us some facts that may be of interest to our readers, and may serve to give us an insight into the character of the two men, who at that early day played so important a part in the ecclesiastical affairs of our country.

The first thing that strikes us in this extensive correspondence is the evidence of deep paternal interest with which Father MacEachern regards the boys now entering upon their studies. Whatever may be the pressing duties that claim his time and attention, he never seems to forget them. Every letter he sends to the Bishop contains a kindly remembrance for them. Compliments, good wishes, news of their parents and friends, minute inquiries concerning their health and progress, these and the like references take up a large share of his letters ; and it seems done with a delightful spirit of familiarity, as a loving parent would be supposed to write of an idolized child.

He always speaks of them as " our boys," or sometimes simply as " Ronald and Donald." Thus, on one occasion he says: " I would be glad to learn how our boys are coming on and if their vocation seems to be constant." Again he writes: " I earnestly wish that every possible care may be taken of our boys Ronald and Donald Macdonald." He evidently foresees how much depends on their perseverance and success, when he continues, " as the efforts of our people towards advancing these institutions will be most undoubtedly actuated by the progress that the first boys may make." The special difficulties that they had to contend with did not escape his notice, and he calls the Bishop's attention to the same in the following words: " Their misfortune is that they do not understand the language in which the explanations are made, and consequently, must be dejected and discouraged among those to whom grammatical rules can be explained in their mother tongue." A strange suggestion is that contained in the letter which he sent by the boys to Quebec. " It would be proper," it goes on to say, " that our lads should be obliged to give some time to reading Gaelic, as a scientific knowledge of said language may be necessary for them in future life." We can readily under-

stand that a knowledge of Gaelic was necessary for missionaries laboring in Prince Edward Island in those days ; but who ever heard of a student learning the language of Ossian in the Seminary of Quebec ? We learn from those letters also that Ronald and Donald must have found the board furnished by the Seminary about as satisfactory as it has appeared to their successors for the three quarters of a century that have since intervened. This is why Father MacEachern asks that they be allowed a substantial breakfast, and states that the same is to be paid for, with the money he intends to remit from time to time for their board and tuition.

If Father MacEachern was unremitting in his attentions to the boys, Bishop Plessis was no less interested in their welfare. His answers to Father MacEachern's letters furnish abundant proof of his solicitude. He omits nothing that concerns them. The place which they hold in their classes, their application to study, their earnestness of purpose, their state of health, their general conduct, even their little personal anxieties, all are described with a fullness of detail that is truly marvellous.

We must here remember that Bishop Plessis was an exceedingly busy man. Father MacEachern, in one of his letters, says that he had " more to do than any man in Canada." Upon his shoulders rested the burden of a diocese extending from Halifax as far west as civilization had dared to penetrate ; and yet amid the multifarious duties of his charge he found time to inquire into the most minute details concerning two boys, whose success he knows to be dear to the heart of their friend and patron in Prince Edward Island. The style and tone of the good Bishop's letters tell a story by themselves. They reveal a degree of familiarity and heart-to-heart sympathy between the writers, the natural out-come of their intimate relationship during the pastoral visit of 1812.

Another fact, that stands out in bold relief from the pages of this correspondence, is the difficulty of sending money from Prince Edward Island to Quebec or to any foreign city in those remote days. The mail service was then in a most rudimentary and unsatisfactory condition. Post Office orders were yet unheard of in the country,

and local business had not sufficiently developed to justify the establishing of a bank. To send money, therefore, to any great distance was a proceeding demanding caution and foresight. A common way was to seek out a trustworthy person who might chance to be going to the place where the money was required, and who would carry the same to its destination. Occasions of this kind, however, were very rare, and perhaps, when most needed, would not occur for months at a time.

Another way of forwarding money, was to make an arrangement with a local merchant having business relations with a dealer in the city to which the money was to be sent. By paying money to a merchant in Charlottetown, for example, his agent or factor in Quebec would pay the same amount on demand to the person for whom it was intended, and charge it to the account of his correspondent in Charlottetown. Thus, when Father MacEachern was sending the two boys to Quebec, he arranged with Mr. MacKay, of Charlottetown, to pay Bishop Plessis the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds for their use. Mr. MacKay, however, did not go to Quebec for some time, and the boys, on this account, reached the Seminary without any provision having been made for their reception, and were obliged to obtain an advance from Bishop Plessis to secure their entrance into the institution.

Sometimes, when the authorities at the Seminary were clamoring for money, and Father MacEachern could find no safe way of sending it, he would apply to Father Burke, of Halifax, who might be able to find a more immediate opportunity of communicating with Quebec; in which case Father Burke would forward the amount demanded and abide the time when Father MacEachern found a way of refunding it.

The Seminary of Quebec did not always take into account these difficulties and was consequently very exacting in its demands. Money had to be forthcoming as soon as due, otherwise the boys had to listen to perpetual complaints from the Superiors of the House, who not unfrequently threatened to dismiss them from the institution. But they had in Bishop Plessis a staunch and firm friend. In all their difficulties he came to their assistance, and when money did not

reach them in time, he made an advance for the good of the cause which he had so much at heart and on which so much now depended.

In the month of September, 1813, Prince Edward Island sent its second contingent of boys to Quebec. They were John and Roderick, sons of Captain John Macdonald, of Glenaladale, who were sent by their mother to enter on a course of studies in the College of Montreal. When they reached Quebec, Bishop Plessis decided that it would be unsafe to send them to Montreal, because that city, on account of the war, was now threatened with a siege. and on this account directed them to the College of Nicolet where they might prosecute their studies in full security.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FATHER MACEACHERN VISITS CAPE BRETON ISLAND.—DIFFICULTY IN
COLLECTING MONEY FOR STUDENTS.—ACCIDENT TO
FATHER MACEACHERN.

During the years of which we have just been treating there resided at Halifax, Nova Scotia, a priest, Reverend Edmund Burke, who, on October 2nd, 1801, had succeeded Father Jones, as Vicar General of the Bishop of Quebec, and Superior of the missions of Nova Scotia.

Father Burke was a man of varied experience. After having served a short time in the missions of Ireland, he made his way to Canada, while yet a young man. Here he was employed by the Bishop of Quebec, first as professor in the Seminary, then as pastor in a country parish, and later as a missionary in the wilds of Upper Canada.

In the last mentioned position he had many opportunities of seeing how very inadequate was the provision made for the spiritual welfare of the outlying portions of the Quebec Diocese, and on coming to the Maritime Provinces he was doubtless prepared to find many missions without priests, and many people in a state of complete spiritual abandonment. Years had elapsed since the Conquest, and the rigors of British rule had considerably relaxed; still not much had been done for a people who, in their deep religious convictions, craved for the bread of the Divine Word.

Away to the eastward lay the Island of Cape Breton, whose forests were fast falling under the axe of the new colonists, who, though rapidly increasing in number, generally spent years at a time un-

cheered by the visit of a clergyman. Priests of their own tongue were rare, and the few there were could not half supply the immediate wants of their too extensive missions.

Hence, when Father Beaubien was established at Rustico and had assumed the care of the Acadian missions of the entire Province, Father Burke decided that Father MacEachern might now occasionally absent himself from his Island missions, and he therefore asked him to cross over to Cape Breton, to bring the benefits of Holy Church to its long neglected Catholic population. The document investing Father MacEachern with the necessary authority is dated August 17th, 1814, and is worded as follows: "The Reverend Angus MacEachern, Missionary in Prince Edward Island, will pass through the Island of Cape Breton, if he can make it convenient, and exercise all the functions of his ministry there amongst the people who speak Erse or English, as he does in Prince Edward Island, and the people will attend to his instructions.—EDMUND BURKE, Vicar General."

By this appointment new and more arduous labors were imposed upon Father MacEachern. In a letter of March 31st, 1815, he gives some particulars of his first experience in this new sphere of duty. "I went, by order of Mr. Burke, to Mainadieu near Scatari, twenty miles from Sydney. I stayed one Sunday at Mainadieu, and went by sea to Louisbourg, fifteen miles, where I stayed some days.

"Between both places I baptized fifty children, remarried four or five couples, confessed as many as chose to present themselves. I found them without instruction but well inclined. They had no priest among them for ten years before." After attending to various matters at Sydney he came down the lakes in an Indian canoe to the Strait of Canso, where he found a schooner in which he took passage for Prince Edward Island.

In the month of July, 1815, Reverend Father Fitzpatrick arrived at Charlottetown from Newfoundland. He brought an *Exeat* from the Bishop of St. John's, and said that he was willing to remain if he should find the climate to agree with him. Bishop Plessis did not consider his credentials very satisfactory and seemed to be for a time in doubt as to his clerical standing. He gave him faculties, however,

and directed Father MacEachern to place him in charge of the people of Charlottetown.

He remained only a few months. Before winter set in he returned to Newfoundland. During his stay in Charlottetown he said Mass in the house of Mrs. MacPhee, and besides attending to the spiritual wants of the people, he laboured to procure materials for building a new church. In a letter dated April 30th, 1816, Father MacEachern thus speaks of him: "In one of my excursions visiting the sick late in the fall to Three Rivers and East Point, Mr. Fitzpatrick took his departure in a transport for Halifax."

"I never heard from him since, but learned the other day that he was to return to Newfoundland. While in Charlottetown he exerted himself so far as to collect a sufficiency to finish our chapel frame of 40 feet by 30 and 20 in the post. Said frame will be raised in the course of the summer and, I hope, covered in." The first church of St. Margaret's was put up about this time. Father MacEachern speaks of it in a letter dated September 19th, 1816. "We have," he writes, "a chapel put up and covered in on Lot No. 44 about 8 miles north of the French at St. Alexis, 45 by 32 and 18 feet in the post.

In the summer of this year Father MacEachern crossed over to Arisaig, Nova Scotia, whence he proceeded by way of Antigonish as far as Sydney. He mentions that he met on this journey a schooner filled with Indians, some of whom had never seen a priest till this time. As they seemed well disposed and desirous of instruction, Father MacEachern remained with them almost a week, instructing them in their religious duties and administering the sacraments to those who profited by his presence to go to confession and communion.

During these years he was engaged in preparing the way for the building of a church at Grand River, Lot 14. Prior to this a small log building, scarcely worthy to be dignified with the name of church, had been used for the purpose by the Catholics of Lot 14, wherein both Father MacEachern and Father Beaubien said Mass when their duties called them in that direction. It was exceedingly small and uninviting in appearance, and accordingly the good people were duly admonished by Father MacEachern, that the time had come

when they should supply themselves with a more commodious place of worship. They went to work to prepare materials and soon erected a frame building thirty-six by twenty-six, which was placed under the patronage of St. Patrick and first opened for public worship on March 17th, 1818.

In a letter written to Bishop Plessis in the autumn of 1816, Father MacEachern says: "As to our boys, I will on my return home send money for their support (if not direct from the Island) through the hands of Mr. Migneault ¹."

This was one of the most arduous and wearisome duties performed by Father MacEachern during those busy years; for to furnish the necessary funds for Ronald and Donald must have taxed his energies to the utmost. The proceeds of St. Andrew's farm, a part of which had been originally intended for the education of clerical students, did not much surpass the expenses incurred in working it, and therefore when the Seminary was clamoring for money, the good priest would have to collect the same from the people, and frequently succeeded only after an endless amount of importunity. Sometimes he would have to go from house to house for weeks at a time, trying to collect the paltry pittance that poverty could spare for so pious and praiseworthy a purpose. How much labor this proceeding must have entailed, amid circumstances such as obtained in those years, can with difficulty be imagined. Father MacEachern, who seldom complained, could scarcely avoid giving expression to the feelings engendered by the hardships and disappointments of the situation. "It is difficult," he writes, "to express the drudgery of collecting money from so many different people; some pretend poverty, others the uncertainty of the success of the students, the loss of their money, although at the same time every one complains of the want of clergy." On account of these and the like flimsy excuses, many either refused or delayed to hand in their contributions, till the good priest, wearied by their indifference, adopted a plan which he thus describes in a letter

1—Mr. Migneault was a priest who resided at Halifax as assistant to Father Burke.

to Bishop Plessis : " I have been obliged to resort to a measure which was repugnant to my own feelings, and which at the same time may not meet Your Lordship's approbation. That was that all those who were in a condition to pay their proportion of the collection laid on them for educating, not only the two boys we have in Quebec, but also some others, *should be refused the sacraments* until payment was made or put in a way of being made." Further on he continues : " I am determined to keep to the measure I have adopted until I am ordered to act otherwise. Nor can I conceive of what use the sacraments can be to those who will not pay a debt which they believe to be a just one." Bishop Plessis did not order him to act otherwise. On the contrary, he approved the measure, harsh though it seems, and supported Father MacEachern with the weight of his episcopal authority. " Since the Catholics of your mission," writes His Lordship, " bound themselves to support these students, there is no doubt that you have the right to refuse the sacraments to those who, by their own fault, fail to pay the amount which they subscribed."

During one of the journeys which he undertook at this time to visit the sick and collect funds for the students, he had the misfortune to meet with an accident which proved a source of much inconvenience for a considerable time. Indeed, it would have permanently disabled many a man of larger frame ; but Father MacEachern, though small of stature, was able to continue his labors, thanks to his sinews of iron and indomitable energy. It happened in this way. On the 28th of January, 1818, he was making his way from Charkottetown to Launching. The snow was deep in places, the roads not well broken, and his progress was consequently slow. At a certain place his way wound round the base of a hill, where it required careful attention to prevent his sleigh from being upset on the slope. Unfortunately a tree overturned by a storm was lying across the track, and he was obliged to leave the beaten path in order to go round it. As his horse was plunging through the deep snow, the sleigh took a sudden lurch and Father MacEachern was in danger of being thrown out. To save himself he put his right hand against a tree standing near, and suc-

ceeded in keeping the sleigh in position ; but the shock was so great that his right shoulder was dislocated. He was alone at the time and twelve miles from the nearest house. To return home at once would have been the wisest course to pursue ; but Father MacEachern thought differently. He managed to get his shoulder into place again, and nothing daunted by the mishap, continued his journey to Launching. The next day was bitterly cold and his arm was intensely painful ; still he would not rest among his friends at Three Rivers, but set out for Rollo Bay, whence after a short stay he proceeded to his home at St. Andrew's. When Bishop Plessis heard of the accident, he wrote him a very sympathetic letter, offering to send a priest who would take care of his missions until he had completely recovered. The kind Bishop would have been delighted to welcome him to Quebec, where he might enjoy a short rest from his labors and receive the medical attention he needed after so painful an injury. Father MacEachern, however, did not like the prospect of forced inactivity. Work was now a second nature to him : so, while deeply touched by the Bishop's kindness, he preferred to stay at his post of duty. In answer to His Lordship's letter he says : " I also received another (letter), wherein Your Lordship offered to afford me relief from my pastoral duties, if necessary for strengthening my dislocated shoulder. I have to return my most humble and grateful thanks for such a friendly offer. I am, thank God, in good bodily health, can stand riding on necessary occasions, although at the same time my arm is still weak, and I find a great difficulty in raising it up to my head."

Another incident of his journeys which occurred about these years may serve to close the present chapter. Father MacEachern, being on his way to hold a station at East Point, called at a house that stood by the wayside, not improbably to collect money for his dear boys at Quebec. On entering the house he found no one at home except a little boy about six years of age, whom he disturbed in the act of roasting a few potatoes on the coals in the fire-place. The lad, who was doubtless hungry, seemed annoyed at the entrance of a stranger, whose presence he was disposed to resent all the more as it interfered with the enjoyment of the meal, which he was indus-

triously preparing. The priest inquired for the father and mother, and learned that they were digging potatoes in a field at some distance from the house. "Well," said Father MacEachern, "will you go to the field and tell your father that I want to speak to him"? The young lad hesitated. "Go," kindly said the priest, "and tell your father that Father MacEachern wants him at the house." On hearing the name of Father MacEachern the boy at once prepared to obey. He took down a straw hat that hung on a peg and started. When he reached the door he stopped, and looking back at the fire-place, ruefully said: "I suppose there will not be a single one of my potatoes left by the time I get back." Father MacEachern, laughing, assured him that he would scrupulously refrain from appropriating any part of the young lad's luncheon.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FATHER BEAUBIEN VISITS THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS.—HIS LABORS IN
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.—HE VISITS QUEBEC.—HIS RELA-
TIONS WITH FATHER MACEACHERN.

While Father MacEachern was thus busily engaged in looking after the English speaking Catholics of Prince Edward Island, and extending his solicitude to those of Cape Breton as well, Father Beaubien found abundant opportunities for the exercise of his priestly zeal throughout the Acadian missions. From Rollo Bay to Tignish he moved as duty called him, ministering to the spiritual wants of the Acadians and of all others who sought his assistance, for his charity extended to all irrespective of race and language. This of itself would seem a task sufficiently arduous for the efforts of one man ; but besides it, the Magdalen Islands also fell to his charge, and added not a little to the sum of his priestly labors. A priest named Father Dufresne had been appointed to the care of those Islands, but was unfortunately drowned on his way thither ; and when Bishop Plessis had been apprised of his death, he wrote at once to Father Béaubien, entreating him to visit the poor people who had not seen a priest for over eighteen months. Father Beaubien immediatly obeyed, and made his way to the Magdalen Islands and remained there several weeks.

The impressions of his first visit he thus conveys to the Bishop :
“ Among these people there are many who sincerely love God, whilst others, and in sufficient number, are not so good. Drunkenness is unfortunately too common. The young people are somewhat perverted,

though they do not fall into the excesses found in other places. Here we have the same neglect of the temporal concerns of the parishes, which we meet with in the missions of Prince Edward Island. I must confess that the greater number of these shortcomings have their origin in the want of priests to direct the people ; for it is a fact that a field, howsoever rich and fertile, will soon deteriorate if not properly cultivated." Taking up the same subject in another letter he tells the Bishop, that it is absolutely necessary to send a priest to reside permanently in the Magdalen Islands, as by no other arrangement can the people receive the spiritual attention they require. He grows pathetic when he speaks of the poor people condemned to pass the entire winter without the possibility of seeing a priest, though they are exposed at any moment to be summoned to the Judgment Seat to give an account of their lives. He says, moreover, that the other missions entrusted to his care must necessarily suffer during his absence ; and to illustrate the statement, he refers to what had occurred in the mission of Rustico. " I must confess," he writes, " that owing to my long absence things have not gone on well in this place (Rustico). It is about a year since I made any stay here, and in that time old habits have re-appeared, and good resolutions have been in some instances abandoned. Since my return I have spoken strongly on the subject, and shall continue to do so while I am here. With God's help, I hope to succeed. The people, though more or less perverse, are obedient to authority, and hearken to appeals made to their sense of duty. I believe the best way to rear the youth in piety is to give them all the instruction possible. I therefore intend to open a school, and in default of a better teacher, will employ a young man whom I have here, who can read and write well and is acquainted with arithmetic. I will keep an eye to it myself as much as possible." Father Beaubien carried this resolution into effect. He established a school at Rustico, thus affording the youth of the mission an opportunity of acquiring at least a rudimentary education, a blessing which, until now, they had not had the good fortune to enjoy.

He still continued to visit the Magdalen Islands, as Bishop Plessis assured him that it was absolutely impossible to find a successor for the

unfortunate Father Dufresne. "Priests," says His Lordship "are dying like flies," and howsoever anxious he is to increase their number he finds that the demand is always far in excess of the supply. He is therefore unable to say when he can send a resident pastor to the people of the Magdalen Islands. "In the meantime," he concludes, no one is more convinced than I am that your missions on St. John's Island are sufficient to keep you well employed. Go then till more favorable circumstances shall arise, and pray the Lord of the harvest to multiply the number of his workmen."

In the spring of 1816 Father Beaubien paid a visit to Quebec. Filial love called him to the bedside of his dying mother, and after a long and wearisome journey, he had the melancholy happiness of seeing her before she breathed her last. He had now spent almost four years in Prince Edward Island, and three years was the period demanded by the rules of the Diocese. Father MacEachern therefore grew anxious lest he should remain at Quebec. He feared, and with some show of reason, that the pleasure of visiting his native land and meeting the friends of his earlier years might wean his heart from the rough and solitary life of the missions, and that after a stay amid the comforts to be found in the interior of the Diocese, he might not be disposed to return to take up the burden of missionary toil among the people of Prince Edward Island. To forestall such a decision on his part Father MacEachern thus wrote to the Bishop: "I hope that Mr. Beaubien will only make a temporary visit to Canada. He is well acquainted with this country, has a tolerable knowledge of the English language, and withal esteemed and respected by all classes of the people. And as for myself, I have uniformly found him very attentive to his duty and a sincere friend to myself. All these circumstances would make his removal very disagreeable." But the anxiety thus manifested by Father MacEachern had no real foundation, for Father Beaubien did not intend to abandon his missions, at least for a while; before the summer was over, he returned to Rustico and resumed his missionary labors to the joy and edification of his flock.

For two years longer he remained at the head of the Acadian

missions, and continued his journeys from place to place in order to confer upon all the benefits of his spiritual ministrations. During the interval, he spent a large share of his time in the Magdalen Islands, where the building of a church and parochial house added not a little to the sum of his labors ; and having set the affairs of his missions in order, he bade a final adieu to Prince Edward Island in the fall of 1818, and returned to his home in Quebec.

Father MacEachern had every reason to regret his departure. For six years they had labored together on the missions, and all the while they had lived on terms of the closest intimacy. Perfect understanding existed between them on all occasions, for every petty view and every personal advantage were made subservient to the one end—the good of souls. Amid the stress of missionary work they were ever ready to help each other, and many a time did the prudent foresight of the one save a tiresome journey for the other. Thus if Father Beaubien were called to the West, he would visit not only his own flock but the English-speaking Catholics as well, while at the same time, Father MacEachern would in all probability be doing a similar favor to the Acadians of the eastern section of the Island. In this way they lightened each other's burden, and were to the whole people a shining example of fraternal charity.

Father Beaubien makes mention of this mutual good feeling in one of his letters to the Bishop of Quebec: " Father MacEachern and myself," he writes, " get along admirably. We meet as often as possible and spend some pleasant moments together. We purify our poor consciences, we take counsel with each other, we rehearse our difficulties, we rejoice together over the good done by God among our people, and many a hearty laugh do we enjoy in recounting the anecdotes which we gather on our journeys."

Soon after his return to Quebec, Father Beaubien was appointed to the pastoral charge of the parish of St. Thomas, an important position, where he died in 1863 at the age of seventy-six years.

CHAPTER XXV.

FATHER CECILE COMES TO RUSTICO.—SENDS SYLVAIN PERRY TO QUEBEC,
—RONALD MACDONALD LEAVES THE SEMINARY.—
THE ACADIAN MISSIONS.

As soon as Father Beaubien made known to Bishop Plessis that he wished to return to Quebec, the latter began to look about for a priest to succeed him, and made choice of Reverend Joseph-Etienne Cécile, a native of Nicolet, who arrived at Rustico on the 29th of September, 1818.

Father Cécile was a man of delicate physique, scarcely able to sustain the hardships that fell to the lot of his more vigorous predecessor, and on this account the Bishop thought better to annex the missions of the Magdalen Islands to those of Cape Breton, so that Father Cécile could confine his activities entirely to the Acadians of Prince Edward Island.

This arrangement had become absolutely necessary, for these people had now grown so numerous and lived in places so far removed from each other, that their pastoral care would tax the energies of any one missionary, no matter how strong in body or how gifted in mind. One of the first difficulties that confronted their new pastor was how to afford so many people an opportunity of receiving Holy Communion during Paschal time ; and he casually mentions the fact, that the people of Rollo Bay had been for six years unable to make their Easter Duty, within the time prescribed for the fulfilment of that obligation.

The year 1819 saw the first Acadian go abroad for the purpose of studying for the priesthood. This was Sylvain Perry (or Poirier), of Tignish, of whom more shall be said in a future chapter. He was chosen by Father Cécile, upon whom the pious dispositions of the young lad had created a very favorable impression, and sent to Quebec where he might enter on a course of studies. In recommending him to the care of Bishop Plessis, Father Cécile says: "I have told the people of Tignish that they should all contribute towards his maintenance, and they said they would do so if obliged to it by authority. If they were all agreed, they could easily furnish funds for the education of young men as the Scotch are doing. If you direct me to levy a small assessment on each person, I shall do so. Other students would be forthcoming if the necessary funds could be raised." In answer to this Bishop Plessis does not give Father Cécile any authority to tax the people for educational purposes; but he fails not to warn him against sending boys to college, without having made due provision for their expenses. After stating that Sylvain Perry will be placed in the College of Nicolet, the Bishop adds, "It seems quite reasonable that the people of Tignish and those of the other localities should be taxed in this manner. The more students we have the greater hopes may we entertain for the future. But do not send any more, unless you foresee that you shall be able to provide for them until the end of their studies." (June 12th, 1819).

Young Perry was the fifth student sent to Canadian colleges from Prince Edward Island. John and Roderick Macdonald, of Tracadie, had spent several years at Nicolet College, but had returned home a short time previous to this, without having completed their studies. Roderick, the younger, had been set apart for the priesthood by his father, who left him by will sufficient property to serve as a patrimonial title; but his superiors at Nicolet did not find that he possessed the qualifications required for the clerical state, and they advised him to turn his mind to some other profession. He, therefore, went to Europe, where he spent considerable time in a state of anxious indecision, and finally decided in favor of a military career, wherein he afterwards achieved a fair measure of success. John was destined to

become the priest of the family. After his return from Nicolet, he spent some time in a college in England, and thence proceeded to Paris where he was ordained priest towards the close of the year 1825.

In the Seminary of Quebec Ronald and Donald Macdonald had, up till now, given the fullest measure of satisfaction to their superiors, and Father MacEachern rejoiced in the assurance that in due time both would come to share his labors on the missions of Prince Edward Island. But about this time, Ronald began to entertain some doubts concerning his vocation, and these doubts soon grew into a conviction that thwarted the hopes of his earlier years. He persevered in his studies for about eight years, and being a brilliant student, his progress was truly marvellous. Until he had finished philosophy his vocation seemed constant, and his friends looked forward to a brilliant career for him in the priesthood; but as he budded into manhood and entered upon the more serious study of theology, his mind underwent a decided change, and other aspirations came to usurp the place formerly filled by priestly desire. Perhaps he thought his genius was such that the honors of the world would necessarily strew his pathway, and that his splendid abilities would find a more suitable field for display, in the garish light of the forum than in the subdued radiance of the sanctuary. Be this as it may, he did not long continue his theological studies. He exchanged the cassock for the dress of the civilian, bade adieu to the Seminary and devoted himself to journalistic work in the city of Quebec. His dreams of a successful future were never realized. Indeed, his subsequent career was as barren of results as his earlier years were pregnant with promise. He turned his energies to various pursuits, but never with success. A fatalistic spell seemed to hang over him, and he died comparatively poor and little known in a city that could boast of few equal to him in education and talents. But Donald, his companion, never wavered in his good purpose, and in due course of time, he was raised to the priesthood and came to share the labors of his patron and friend on the missions of Prince Edward Island.

On assuming charge of the Acadian missions, Father Cécile found that the people of Rustico had not carried out, as he supposed they

should have done, the instructions laid down by Bishop Plessis during his visit in 1812. The difference of opinion which had arisen in the parish on the occasion of the building of their church, and which, as we have elsewhere mentioned, led to the selection of two sites, had not completely died out, though one site had been long since abandoned. But those who lived on the south side of the River had ever since steadfastly refused to pay any part of the expenses incurred in buying the farm whereon the church had been built, alleging as an excuse that, had the site which they had proposed been chosen, six acres of land would have been gratuitously given to the church and in this way the expense of buying a farm would have been avoided¹. Father Cécile, however, was not satisfied with this state of affairs. Indeed, he seems to have grown somewhat scrupulous on account of it, for he asks the Bishop if such people could be in good faith, and should they be permitted to frequent the sacraments, whilst thus persisting in their refusal to pay a share of the purchase money of the parochial farm. To have asked such a question would seem tantamount to a reflection upon the conduct of his predecessor; but it may be that like the proverbial new broom, Father Cécile was trying to be rigidly exact in his dealings with his flock, and for that reason was anxious to lay down more definite lines of demarcation in that debatable region where spirituals and temporals touch in the administration of parochial affairs. His doubts, however, were soon dispelled. Bishop Plessis hastened to assure him by a letter in which he says: "On the occasion of my visit in 1812 I ordered all the people of Rustico to fence and otherwise care for the parochial farm, but not to assume the cost of the purchase, though I was well aware that it had been bought by only a small number of the parishioners. It is not necessary therefore to trouble the others on this point, but insist that all together do their share in looking after the farm and cemeteries." Further on he adds: "From my point of view, I would say that you shall never see the end of it if you try to exact payment from all the parishioners, both old and new."

1 — Mr. Blanchard had offered six acres of land free if the church would be built on it.

During the years that had intervened since the visit of Bishop Plessis, the mission of St. Alexis, in the eastern section of King's County, had grown to be a place of considerable importance. Its inhabitants, in their earlier years, had shared the vicissitudes of fortune that fell to the lot of the much tried Acadian people ; but, with the indomitable spirit of their race, they had survived those years of trial, had steadily increased in numbers, and had acquired a fair measure of prosperity despite the disadvantages under which they labored. Now they were in peaceful possession of the lands, and the fear of being again dispossessed no longer disturbed their minds, and so, with firm confidence born of favorable circumstances, they had labored assiduously and successfully to ameliorate their condition. The trees had fallen under their axes like grain before the sickle of the mower ; new homes sprang up as if by magic on the banks of the beautiful bay, and the quiet rural scenes of old Acadia were being gradually evoked from the forest.

The one drawback with which they had now to contend was the scarcity of clergy and the consequent lack of spiritual attention. The annual visit of a priest about Easter time, which in past years was deemed sufficient for all their spiritual needs, fell far short of satisfying the multiplied wants of the more populous mission ; and even when Father Cécile would make a protracted stay amongst them, it was difficult for all to approach the sacraments or to receive the religious instructions rendered imperative by their circumstances.

Tignish, at the other extremity of the Island, was in a like condition. Here too, the population had steadily increased in numbers. The pioneers, who in 1799 had laid the foundation of the mission, were joined from time to time by others, who sought a seeming security in the remoteness of the locality, and thus the population soon swelled into a congregation that taxed the capacity of the little church in which they assembled for divine worship. The poor people saw a priest but seldom and consequently received only scanty spiritual attention ; but their faith was fervent, their hope in God unfailing, and their charity of the kind described by the Apostle,

which “endureth all things,” and “never falleth away”, “whether prophecies be made void, or tongues cease, or knowledge be destroyed.”

In the closing years of Father Beaubien's stay in the missions a new settlement was formed on the estate of Colonel Compton. In a former chapter we referred to the disputes between this gentleman and his Acadian tenants, which culminated in the latter being obliged to abandon Lot 17 and move further to the westward. Seeing his estate thus in a fair way of becoming depopulated, the Colonel became more reasonable in his demands and more disposed to deal amicably with the few who had remained on his lands. Hence, when a number of them offered to purchase a tract of woodland on Lot 17, to the west of where they had hitherto resided, he was not only willing to entertain the proposition, but offered the land on such advantageous terms that a bargain was speedily effected. On the 28th of September, 1816, he signed a deed by which he conveyed to them six thousand acres of land, for which they had agreed to pay the sum of £625.0.0. In a short while they moved to their new possessions, and the log cabins which they put up to shelter themselves and their families were the rude beginnings of the present thriving village of Miscouche.

In the early stages of its history the settlement was without a church, and for more than a year the people attended Mass in the church near the “Pavillion”, as often as Father Cécile chanced to come the way. This, however, was an unsatisfactory arrangement, and in course of time they grew weary of it, not on account of the distance, which after all was only slight compared to the journeys that many others had to make in order to assist at Mass, but now almost all their friends had abandoned the neighbourhood, and there was always a certain revulsion of feeling in revisiting scenes of former happiness, and awakening memories which tended to “embitter the present compared to the past.” They therefore decided to remove the church to the new settlement, which being done, it was again opened for divine service at Miscouche in the month of July, 1819.

A short time subsequent to this, the people of Egmont Bay had had the misfortune to lose the church in which they had worshipped since their departure from Lot 17. On a morning about Epiphany 1821, as

two men of the neighbourhood were starting on a journey shortly before day-light, they noticed a ruddy glare reflected on the sky and which seemed to shine from the direction of the church. They made their way thither as quickly as possible and found the building in flames. The fire had made such headway that nothing could be done to save it, and it was burned to the ground with all its contents.

Though small in size and inexpensive in finish its loss was sorely felt by the poor people, who in their straitened circumstances could ill afford to replace it. A local poet of the day enshrined in verse their feelings on the occasion, and for many years his plaintive lay was sung at their firesides, thus keeping alive, in the measured cadence of the beautiful French tongue, the melancholy memories of their loss.

But the good people, though pained by the destruction of their church, were by no means discouraged. They went to work at once to rebuild, and when Father Cécile came to visit them during Lent, as was his custom, he found the work so far advanced that he was able to say Mass in the new building, though scarcely two months had elapsed since the fire.

The history of the mission of Fifteen Point goes back to the years that are now engaging our attention. The people, it is true, had settled there as early as 1812; but for several years they continued to form part of the mission of Egmont Bay, whither they were obliged to go to hear Mass and receive the sacraments. Now, however, they thought the time had come when they should have a church of their own, and in June, 1820, Thomas Richard donated a plot of ground for the use of the mission. The people accepted the gift with alacrity and soon they built a log church, unpretentious in size and appearance, but glorying in being the first sanctuary dedicated on Prince Edward Island to the common Mother of the Faithful, Our Lady of Mount Carmel. When it was ready for the purpose of divine worship Father Cécile came to them, and the voice of sacrifice was heard within its walls, as the King of Glory came down to take possession of his sanctuary and consecrate it forever by his Eucharistic presence.

In this way the good work went on in the Acadian missions under the guiding hand of Father Cécile, who by his zeal and devotedness left an undying memory amongst the people whom he so well and so faithfully served. A priest who knew him in after life thus summarized his character and dispositions.

“ His exterior,” he writes, “ was by no means prepossessing. Austere and brusque in his manner, he laid aside all outward manifestation of feeling. He was severe but just, and gave expression to his opinions curtly and without oratorical effort. His charity was unobtrusive ; his left hand knew not what the right had given ; but at the same time he was as pitiless for the lazy as he was distrustful of those whom he found wanting in sincerity. He was fond of study, and though not what would be called a learned man, he was able to give excellent advice to those who needed wise counsel, and his deep knowledge of Holy Scripture he always turned to good account in the religious instruction of youth. His post of duty was the sacristy, where he transacted all parochial business and where his flock were sure to find him should any of them need his assistance. Such,” he concludes, “ was Father Cécile in his public life. His memory is in veneration, and the old people who knew him mention his name always with religious respect.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

EFFORTS MADE TO DIVIDE THE DIOCESE OF QUEBEC.—FATHER BURKE'S
VIEWS OF THE MATTER.—NOVA SCOTIA SEPARATED FROM
QUEBEC.—FATHER MACEACHERN NAMED BISHOP
OF ROSEN.—HIS CONSECRATION.

In the present chapter we purpose to retrace our steps somewhat, so as to deal with a question intimately connected with the years which we have just passed in review. We refer to the division of the Diocese of Quebec. We candidly confess that we approach the subject with considerable diffidence, knowing that it has given rise to contradictory opinions, and has occasioned that blame merited or unmerited has been laid at the door of the holy prelates, who at that time occupied the See of Quebec.

One thing however seems clear in the premises, viz: that such a division had become absolutely necessary in order that the outlying portions of the Diocese might have the spiritual attention they required. It was impossible indeed that this could be effected in a region so extensive, under a system which a Canadian writer has sarcastically called "the incubus of centralization at Quebec."

No one realized this truth more fully than the Bishops themselves. They felt more keenly than any other, how inadequate were their efforts to do even scanty justice to so many scattered people. Bishop Hubert spent ten years in making a visitation of his Diocese, and at the end of that period there still remained the whole of the Maritime Provinces and portions of the upper Provinces as well, which he was unable to visit in person. Moved by this fact he opened negotiations

•

with the Holy See on the 24th of October, 1789, setting forth that some form of diocesan dismemberment would have to be adopted in order to remedy the present unsatisfactory conditions. The Holy See seemed quite favorable to his views of the matter, and would have doubtless carried them into effect, had it not been for the opposition of the Court of St. James. In matters of this kind the British Government had to be reckoned with in those days. The Penal Laws were as much in force as at any period since the sixteenth century, and though the Treaty of Paris guaranteed to the Catholics of Canada the free exercise of their religion, the Church was not recognized, but only tolerated by the Government. On account of the opposition from the civil authorities Bishop Hubert failed in his attempt at division, and a few years later, he died at the head of a Diocese still comprising the whole of Canada. Bishop Denaut resumed the negotiations, but with no better results. When Bishop Plessis succeeded to the See of Quebec, he saw at a glance the difficulties of the situation. In a letter to a friend in London he wrote in 1806 : " Examine the map, and you will see that it is impossible for one Bishop to extend his solicitude with any degree of success from Lake Superior to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. That territory contains more than two hundred thousand Catholics, and yet there are only one hundred and eighty priests to attend to their spiritual wants. Add to this the difficulties arising from their entanglement with a Protestant population, and the constant vigilance necessary to avoid being compromised with a Government that views things only through the medium of its own principles, and which is constantly making new efforts to establish the Royal Supremacy." As years went on, however, the rigors of the Penal Laws began sensibly to relax. It is true, nothing of a positive nature was done to ameliorate the condition of the Catholics, but many disabilities, under which they labored, were gradually losing their former vigor, and many of the existing laws were allowed to become a dead-letter. Catholics throughout the Empire had demonstrated their loyalty even in the face of persecution, and the Government was beginning to see little by little that no greater good could be done to the Empire at large, than to remove the iniquitous yoke

•

of servitude from the necks of this long suffering people, and to grant them the rights and privileges enjoyed by their Protestant fellow-citizens.

Many causes conspired to bring about this happy change of sentiment. In the first place, by the death of the Cardinal Duke of York in 1807, the male line of the House of Stuart had become extinct, and there was therefore no longer any reason to fear, that another Catholic Pretender should arise to dispute the right of sovereignty with the reigning dynasty.

Again, during the wars of Napoleon, Catholic soldiers had upheld with their blood the glory of the British Flag, though it had never been for them an emblem of freedom or fairplay. When the trumpet called to war they paused not to consider the wrongs and insults borne patiently for years, but went forth to fight the foes of England, remembering only that they were members of God's Church, and subjects of the British King. And thus a hundred battlefields stained with Catholic blood were earnestly appealing to England's sense of justice, and proclaiming that the time had come when the chains forged by bigotry should be broken, and a people too long enslaved should be free. On the American Continent, too, Catholic soldiers had fought and died for the British cause. When, in 1812, the United States threw down the gage of battle to England, the Catholics of Canada never wavered in their allegiance, though many and great were the inducements held out to them. The Bishop of Quebec called upon his flock to stand firm in their loyalty to Great Britain, and his clergy never ceased to make common cause against the enemies of England. One of their number, Reverend Alexander Macdonald, a missionary in Ontario, raised from amongst his own parishioners two companies of Scottish soldiers, who, cheered by the presence of their brave pastor, helped to keep the flag of Britain floating in triumph over that part of Canada.

But what contributed most of all to develope a kindly feeling between the British Government and the Catholic people, was the beneficent action of Pius VII, the illustrious occupant of the Chair of Peter in the early years of the nineteenth century. When Napoleon

had reached the zenith of his power and Europe trembled at his word, England almost alone stood out defiantly to check the haughty conqueror in his career of blood. England, called by him in contempt "a nation of shopkeepers," stood in the way of his ambition, and he determined to crush her in the only way that seemed feasible, by striking a decisive blow at her commerce. He formed a plan known as the "Continental System" by issuing a decree to the crowned heads of Europe, commanding them to close their seaports to British vessels and exclude from their markets the goods of Britain. The monarchs of Europe, in many cases creatures of his own appointment, did not dare to disobey; but when he made the same demand of the Pope, he was met with a flat refusal. Pius VII could not boast of military power; he was indeed, in this respect, the very antithesis of the French Emperor; but he steadfastly refused to lend the prestige of his name and office to a measure so flagrantly violative of international justice. Clearly he told Napoleon that the Holy See could not entertain such unfair proposals; that it would maintain the strictest neutrality, and that the British merchantmen, as well as those of other nations, would continue to enjoy free access to the seaports of the Papal States.

This kindly action of the Pope had a most salutary effect in England and the Colonies. From this time the justice-loving monarch of the Vatican found his way to the esteem of the English people, and thus helped to throw down the barriers which prejudice had raised between the Government of the day and its Catholic subjects.

By the concurrent action of all these causes, the British public was gradually adopting a more reasonable view of the Catholic position; prejudices were being dispelled, wrong opinions laid aside, and events were shaping themselves so as to render possible, in the near future, the work of hierarchical reconstruction so necessary to the Church in Canada.

In the meantime the question of dividing the Diocese of Quebec was engaging the attention of Reverend Edmund Burke of Halifax. His intimate knowledge of existing conditions convinced him, that people living so far from the centre of authority could rarely receive

the attention they required ; and, prudent man that he was, he saw that some change was vitally necessary, if the Church was to hold her allotted place in shaping the destinies of the country. In the year 1815 he paid a visit to Europe. He had been suffering for some time from an internal complaint which required special treatment ; and he believed that the ocean voyage and the superior medical skill available in London would serve to re-establish his failing health. He left Halifax in the month of July, 1815, and having visited Ireland and England, made his way to Rome. While in London he forwarded a memorial to the Congregation of the Propaganda, in which he described the state of the Church in Canada.

He emphasizes the fact that one Bishop, howsoever active, cannot exercise his pastoral watchfulness over so extensive a region. Referring to the Maritime Provinces he says, that on account of the Penal Laws the British Government would never consent to the erection of new bishoprics, and for the same reason it would not be necessary to ask the consent of the Bishop of Quebec, who himself cannot exercise any jurisdiction in those Provinces without the special permission of their respective Governors. " Therefore," he adds, " let there be appointed Prefects Apostolic, who secretly and quietly may administer the spiritual affairs of the people under their charge."

Father Burke's plan, therefore, did not call for new Bishops. He merely wanted to have in each Province a priest invested with the authority of a Bishop, who could thus, unknown to the civil authorities, direct the spiritual affairs of the territory subject to him. The languishing state of religion in the Provinces by the sea was a source of perpetual anxiety to Father Burke, and he attributed the same to the fact that the Bishops were too distant to cope with the difficulties of the situation. Let them be ever so watchful and ever so zealous : evils demanding at once the weight of their episcopal authority might exist for months at a time, without their being aware of the fact. Then again, there was the want of clergy, and the want of adequate provision for the future of the missions. Priests were too few in number for the multiplied wants of the Maritime missions, and heretofore the flourishing and comfortable parishes in the interior of the Diocese

had drawn to themselves the great majority of the native clergy. To raise up clergy and appoint them to a sphere of duty belongs to episcopal authority, and if Father MacEachern, Father Burke and some other priests of the Maritime Provinces had given their time, their labor and their money for this end, it was from pure charity and not from any obligation arising from their position.

Father Burke's remedy for conditions then existing, was to have at the scene of action a priest with the necessary authority to take the initiative in all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the people; a priest who would not have to look to Quebec for the word of command, and then wait for months whilst perhaps his letter or its answer had gone astray and was lost; a priest, in a word, who would be free and unhampered to exercise his own foresight in providing for the wants of the missions.

Father Burke's opinion as set forth in his memorial is worthy of our highest consideration, as he had had ample opportunities of understanding the various aspects of the question. He had now spent close on thirty years in Canada, had travelled over the entire length of the inhabited portion of it, had filled various positions under the Bishops of Quebec, and was moreover well acquainted with the manner in which ecclesiastical affairs were managed in Ireland, where he had labored prior to his coming to Canada. Hence, when we consider his eminent learning, his varied experience, his unquestionable interest in a country made his own by adoption, we should be disposed to admit that his views were right, even if we had not the light of subsequent history to establish their truth to a certainty.

True, it has been urged against him, with what truth we do not presume to say, that he was ambitious; that he longed for the day when he himself should wear the mitre. This, however, is no answer to his memorial, for even were it true that Father Burke was desirous of grasping the crozier, his views as set forth in his memorial could not be vitiated nor nullified by that fact.

It has been said also that, being Vicar General of the Bishop of Quebec, he should have consulted his spiritual superior before taking action in this matter. This is a graver charge which we will not

attempt to discuss, for our business here is not with the man, but with his memorial to the Holy See, not with his motives, but with his opinions regarding the question of the division of the Diocese of Quebec.

Moreover, we have every reason for believing that his plan had been submitted to Father MacEachern before Father Burke set sail for Europe. The frequent communication by letter between the two priests, the similarity of their respective positions, the fact that each in his own Province experienced similar difficulties, and labored under the like disadvantages, would lead us to suppose that they must have often taken counsel together, and perhaps mutually aided in evolving the plans submitted by Father Burke to the consideration of the Propaganda. Be this at it may, we have abundant evidence from the subsequent letters of Father MacEachern that he approved of the plan in its entirety, and indeed regarded its adoption as the only safety for the cause of religion in Prince Edward Island and the Maritime Provinces in general.

Father Burke's mission to Rome was in part successful. It was soon followed by the first dismemberment of the Diocese of Quebec, the Province of Nova Scotia having been raised to the dignity of a Vicariate Apostolic and Father Burke placed at its head with the title of Bishop of Sion. This change was effected in 1817. Henceforth freed from the jurisdiction of Quebec, Father Burke may inaugurate whatsoever plans he will for the welfare of his flock; and if, by chance, religion should not flourish in the new Vicariate, his it will be to pronounce a penitent *mea culpa*, and not seek to shift the blame to the shoulders of the Canadian Bishops.

The views entertained by Bishop Plessis regarding the necessities of his Diocese did not coincide with those set forth in the memorial of Bishop Burke. His plan was to have five Bishops, viz: one in the North West, another in Upper Canada, a third at Montreal, a fourth in the Maritime Provinces, and a fifth at Quebec who would thus be the Metropolitan of all Canada. Four Bishops having full authority in their respective Dioceses, with a Metropolitan at their head, would undoubtedly be the most effective and most satisfactory plan that

could be adopted for the welfare of all people concerned ; but unfortunately it was not the most feasible, owing to the opposition of the British Government ; and this, we think, should not have escaped the attention of Bishop Plessis, for he had considered the question in all its bearings. Father Burke knew well that the Penal Laws stood in the way of such a plan, at least as far as the Maritime Provinces were concerned, and states the fact very clearly in his memorial, making it the reason for the appointment of Prefects Apostolic in preference to regularly consecrated Bishops.

Bishop Plessis, however, persevered in his own opinion, and in 1819 made a journey to Europe, in the hope that better success would attend his efforts, were he to lay the matter before the British Government in person. Arrived in London he saw that Father Burke's view was right. The British Government found it easier to do business with one Bishop than with many, and therefore, in consenting to the consecration of four new ones, it expressly stipulated that they were to be auxiliary Bishops only, depending as before on the Bishop of Quebec. In other words, they were to be merely his Vicars-General with episcopal consecration, and as such, they did not have the necessary initiative authority to do justice to the cause of religion especially in the outlying districts. The difference between the two plans was this : Father Burke wanted priests having episcopal authority with or without episcopal consecration, while the latter plan asks for quasi-superiors having episcopal consecration but no authority of their own. Whilst it does not seem to us the best for the cause of religion in the Maritime Provinces, it was certainly much to the advantage of the Bishop of Quebec. He had all the authority as before, and at the same time, thanks to the devotedness of his auxiliary Bishops, he would be spared the long journeys of his earlier episcopate. After his return from England Bishop Plessis communicated to the faithful of his Diocese the result of his mission. He speaks of the opposition put forth by the Court of London, on which account his original plan had to be considerably modified. Referring to the new order of things, he says : " The Holy See yielding to circumstances placed this diocese on the same footing as that of Wilna in Lithuania,

whose Bishop has four suffragans consecrated with the title *in partibus infidelium*, and living in four sections of his Diocese where they exercise episcopal jurisdiction derived from him." By virtue of the above decision, four suffragans were appointed to the Bishop of Quebec, viz: Right Reverend Joseph-Norbert Provencher, for the North West, with the title of Bishop of Juliopolis; Right Reverend Alexander MacDonnell, for Upper Canada, with the title of Bishop of Rhesina; Right Reverend Jean-Jacques Lartigue, for the district of Montreal, with the title of Bishop of Telmesse, and—what is of more interest to our history—Right Reverend Angus Bernard MacEachern, with the title of Bishop of Rosen, for the district comprising New Brunswick, Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island.

The Brief conferring the new honor on Father MacEachern is dated January 12th, 1819; but more than two years elapsed before his consecration. Bishop Plessis did not return from Europe till the month of August, 1820, and before he had time to communicate with Father MacEachern and the latter could make the necessary arrangements to provide for the missions during his absence, the season was so far advanced that his trip to Quebec had to be postponed till the following year.

Towards the end of February, 1821, he was called to Malpeque and there engaged two Indians to accompany him to Quebec. Their plan was to start in June or July, cross over to New Brunswick, go up the St. John River to its source, traverse the Province of Quebec to the St. Lawrence and proceed by way of the latter river to their destination. When making this arrangement with his Indian guides, he was not aware that there was a letter on the way to him from Bishop Plessis, telling him to be at Quebec not later than about the first of June, as after that date His Lordship would be absent from his Cathedral city. If, however, Father MacEachern should find it more convenient to go to Newfoundland, he permitted him to do so, and to receive episcopal consecration at the hands of the Vicar Apostolic of St. John's. Should he decide to go to Quebec and be obliged to make the journey by way of the United States, Bishop Plessis gave him faculties to exercise his ministry in the Dioceses of New York and Boston, of which the Bishops of Quebec were usually

Vicars-General. Bishop Plessis' letter, though written on the 10th of January, did not reach Father MacEachern till the 24th of March. He decided to set out for Quebec without delay ; for it was his fervent wish to receive consecration from his kind friend, the Bishop of Quebec. At the same time he hoped to profit by the occasion to confer personally with him and with the Earl of Dalhousie, regarding the civil condition of the Catholic people under the administration of Governor Smith. He therefore sends an immediate answer in which he says : " Now it rests with me to get to Canada by the surest and speediest way. As there is no vessel on this Island bound for Quebec, I suppose I must cross to Pictou, then to Halifax and endeavor to proceed to Montreal either by Boston or New York. Many reasons urge me to overtake Your Grace in Quebec, not only regarding our spiritual affairs, but also some of our temporal concerns. Your influence with the Governor General will be of infinite use to us in order to obtain, through the proper channel, some relaxation of the odious distinctions that exist, and are strictly observed nowhere in North America but on this Island."

Notwithstanding the inconveniences of travel and the many delays he doubtlessly had to make on his way, Father MacEachern reached Quebec before Bishop Plessis had set out on his pastoral visitation ; and on Sunday, June 17th, 1821, he received episcopal consecration in the church of St. Roch, amid ceremonies which, for pomp and splendor, had never been excelled, if indeed equalled, in the history of the Church in Canada. The consecrating prelate was Bishop Plessis, and he had for assistants his coadjutor Right Reverend Bernard-Claude Panet, and Right Reverend Alexander Macdonell, Titular Bishop of Rhesina. The sermon on the occasion was preached by Reverend Father Bruneau, Parish Priest of Beauport. It was the first time that four Bishops, were seen together in one church in Canada.

Lady Dalhousie graced the occasion by her presence, and the Governor too would have assisted, had he not been called away from home on business of importance. In the afternoon the new prelate officiated at his first pontifical function, by singing vespers in the Cathedral of Quebec.



REV. BERNARD D. MACDONALD

CHAPTER XXVII.

FATHER MACDONALD ORDAINED.—FATHER FITZGERALD COMES TO CHARLOTTETOWN.—FIRST ORDINATION IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

After a short stay in Quebec Bishop MacEachern returned to his flock in Prince Edward Island.

Heretofore a simple priest, sharing in all the privations of the people whom he served, he is now a Bishop, invested with new claims to the veneration of the faithful, and adorned in a higher degree with the powers and prerogatives of the Divine Master.

But though a Bishop, he is the same gentle, unassuming servant of God. The new honor entailed no change of deportment, except inasmuch as it brought more arduous labours, and higher and more numerous responsibilities. He still continued to perform the duties of missionary priest throughout the English-speaking missions of Prince Edward Island, besides doing the episcopal work, which belonged by office to the Bishop of Quebec, in a region comprising Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton, the Magdalen Islands and the entire Province of New Brunswick.

From this time forward no Bishop of Quebec came to the Maritime Provinces for the exercise of episcopal functions, though for many years these provinces continued integral parts of that diocese. On the 25th of March 1822, Archbishop Plessis¹ assures Bishop MacEachern, in a most categorical manner, that this additional burden must rest on the shoulders of the latter for the future. "I flatter myself", writes His Grace, "that you shall not count on me to exercise this

1 — He became Archbishop in 1819.

ministry in the Province of New Brunswick, much less in the Islands of the Gulf." In this way the Archbishop practically adopts the Ciceronian phrase "Leisure with dignity," as far as the Maritime Provinces were concerned, while Bishop MacEachern traverses the country from Sydney to Madawaska, administering Confirmation, selecting sites for churches, opening up new missions, establishing new boundaries for old ones and looking after the clergy who, few and far between, were exposed to dangers and beset with difficulties unknown in a more settled and better organized community. Travelling always at his own expense, he performed all these duties and various others as well for the Archbishop with absolutely no remuneration for his services, but depending for a living, all the while, on the tithes contributed by his missions in Prince Edward Island.

In the first years of his episcopate these missions received much of his attention, for new churches were to be built in certain localities to replace the old ones now falling into disrepair. Thus we find him during those years suspending the round of his episcopal labors to build churches at Launching, Panmure Island and East Point, while attending to works of repairing necessary in other places, and at the same time collecting funds and buying materials to erect a suitable residence for himself at St. Andrew's.

The month of June 1822 is memorable in the ecclesiastical history of Prince Edward Island, because it witnessed the ordination at Quebec of Reverend Bernard Donald Macdonald, the first Islander raised to the holy priesthood. Ten years previously Father MacEachern had made choice of him from amongst many, and with true paternal solicitude provided for all his wants during his studies in the Seminary; and now that the promises of his earlier years have been fully realized, the good Bishop feels that the dark night of single-handed effort is to be followed by a bright and cheerful day, when Prince Edward Island shall have a priest of its own to share the burden of toil and sacrifice, which he himself had carried alone for upwards of thirty years. It was a bright and cheerful prospect for the pious missionary bending under the weight of his sixty-four years; but unfortunately he must wait some time longer before he sees the realization of his cherished hopes.

Father Macdonald was not permitted to return directly after his ordination. He was retained at Quebec for three months exercising the ministry among the Irish emigrants who were stricken with fever and whose spiritual condition would have been deplorable indeed, had it not been for the timely care of a priest, Reverend Father Paisley, assisted by the young and zealous Father Macdonald.

It was the month of September when Father Macdonald reached home, and then arose a new difficulty which obliged Bishop MacEachern to abandon the plans recently formed for the spiritual welfare of his flock. Father Cécile decided to return to Quebec as soon as a helper had been found for the Bishop of Rosen. He wrote to the Archbishop for permission which His Grace at once granted, without however making any provision for the people thus left without a pastor. Hence Father Macdonald had to leave the people who had educated him for themselves, and go to labor among the Acadians a second time abandoned by their own countrymen. On his return to Quebec Father Cécile was appointed to the flourishing parish of Berthier. Later on we find him at Saint-Pierre-Rivière-du-Sud, and finally at Cap St. Ignace, where he died on the 29th of March, 1857.

In the summer of 1822, a priest from Newfoundland wrote to Bishop MacEachern, offering his services for the missions of Prince Edward Island. The Bishop without delay communicated the fact to the Archbishop, who says in answer: "If this Mr. Fitzgerald who comes to you from Newfoundland is sufficiently recommended by Dr Scallan, he can be placed with advantage at Charlottetown; and in that case, you may communicate to him in writing the same faculties I gave to yourself in 1812, excepting those which related to Nova Scotia, where, as you are aware, neither you nor I have any jurisdiction." In July, 1823, Father Fitzgerald arrived, and took up his residence in Charlottetown, a mission made up principally of emigrants from Ireland and Newfoundland. Besides these his zeal was exercised in behalf of the Catholic settlers of West River, Point Prim and Vernon River.

Father Macdonald was employed in the Acadian missions, having

under his care a territory extending from Rustico to Tignish, while the Bishop himself attended to the spiritual wants of all the Catholics from Tracadie to East Point. At the same time the work on his new house at St. Andrew's went on apace, so that he was able to move into it on the 13th of November, 1823. This house was a building of some importance in its day. It was in fact the largest and most imposing residence in the eastern portion of the Island, and was regarded with no little curiosity by a people, many of whom still lived in the old-fashioned log houses. But Bishop MacEachern was not merely providing a home for himself. His own personal comforts were indeed very little in his thoughts. He was rather looking forward to a time when, through change of circumstances, he might be able to found a college for the education of young men destined for the priesthood. The need of such an institution was becoming every year more apparent, for Quebec had now completely abandoned Prince Edward Island to its own resources ; and as far as the supplying of missionaries went, it might, in some measure, be said to have done so from the Conquest. Long and painful experience, therefore, convinced Bishop MacEachern that the key to the situation lay in a college ; and he determined to build a house sufficiently large and commodious to serve that purpose, in the event of Prince Edward Island being cut off from Quebec and having a Bishop with independent jurisdiction.

Father Fitzgerald, who had charge of Charlottetown and surrounding districts, was an earnest and energetic worker. When he arrived at Charlottetown he went to board at the house of Mrs. MacPhee, and immediately opened a subscription list to raise funds to complete the interior of the church and to build a parochial house in the city. He then rented the " Rosebank Farm ", a property belonging to the Stewart Family, and situated on the south side of the Hillsborough River, opposite Charlottetown, and there he took up his residence, with one of his nephews who intended to carry on farming on an extensive scale. On Sunday morning, October 24th, 1823, the dwelling-house on Rosebank Farm was destroyed by fire, and Father Fitzgerald lost his furniture and books. After this disaster he returned

to the city and rented a house on the corner of Grafton and Rochford Streets, where he lived until a new parochial house was ready for occupation.

Father Macdonald, like the Bishop himself, could not, by reason of his numerous missions, remain long in one place. Rustico and Miscouche seem to have been the chief centres from which he set out on his missionary journeys, and to which he returned at their close. As soon as he took charge of Miscouche, he started the building of a new church in which he said the first Mass on Christmas Eve, 1823.

The beginning of the following year witnessed the first ordination service held on Prince Edward Island. On the 4th of February, Reverend William MacLeod was ordained deacon by Bishop MacEachern in the church of St. Andrew's, and on the following Sunday, February the 8th, he was raised to the sacred order of the priesthood. Father MacLeod was a native of Arisaig, Nova Scotia, who with a companion, John Chisholm, of Antigonish, had been sent to the Seminary of Quebec in the year 1813. In this institution they remained as long as the people of the Gulf Shore of Nova Scotia proved willing to pay their expenses; but when money was no longer forthcoming, the Directors of the Seminary without further ceremony turned the two young men out of doors. At this juncture Archbishop Plessis came to their relief. He placed them in the College of Nicolet, at the expense of the Diocese, and in the fall of 1823, sent Mr. MacLeod down to St. Andrew's, that he might fill the office of Secretary to the Bishop of Rosen, and at the same time continue his studies in preparation for the priesthood. But Bishop MacEachern had little need of a secretary. It was priests he wanted, priests for whom countless souls were sighing, and so he bade the young Levite apply himself with all possible diligence to study and prayer, and thus prepare himself, mind and heart, for the arduous duties before him. He was accordingly ordained priest on the 8th of February, 1824, and soon after was appointed to the mission of East Bay, in Cape Breton Island, where Bishop MacEachern had bought a house and land from an Indian Chief some time previous to this date.

In the summer of this year Governor Smith's term of office came to an end, and he was succeeded by Colonel John Ready, who arrived on the 21st of October, 1824. The new Governor was a man of broad, patriotic views, and his administration was marked by steady progress in the colony. Bishop MacEachern found in him a staunch and earnest friend; and the whole Catholic people had reason to bless the day when he was chosen to fill the place of his autocratic predecessor. His assumption of office marked the dawn of a new era for the Catholic people. Gradually they grew into favor as prejudice gave way before a milder and more impartial public opinion. From this time forward their interests will be championed by Protestants whose names are synonyms of integrity; and if justice was yet delayed for some years, the descendants of the people whose cause they espoused owe to those strenuous advocates of Catholic rights, a just tribute of respect and gratitude.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FATHER FITZGERALD'S LABORS IN CHARLOTTETOWN.—CATHOLICS COME INTO FAVOR.—QUESTION OF THE FRANCHISE RAISED.—
DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP PLESSIS.

The year 1825 opened auspiciously with an ordination in the Church of St. Andrew's. On the Feast of Epiphany, Reverend John Chisholm, former companion of Father William MacLeod at Quebec, was raised to the priesthood by Bishop MacEachern. Soon after his ordination he fell grievously ill, and was unable to do missionary work during the entire winter. After his recovery he remained a few months with Bishop MacEachern, dividing his time between Rustico, St. Andrew's, and the eastern missions of King's County, and in the month of October, crossed over to Cape Breton to assume pastoral charge of the people residing at Mabou and Broad Cove.

By this time Father Fitzgerald had spent wellnigh two years in Charlottetown, and from the letters of Bishop MacEachern we learn that he had done " ample justice " to his flock. True, he may not have been as careful as prudence demanded regarding the ceremonies and details of divine worship, since Archbishop Plessis complains that he " celebrated Mass with a chalice made of tin and which had no paten : a proceeding ", says His Grace, " which cannot be permitted." But he was nevertheless a strenuous and indefatigable worker, as fearless in his condemnation of wrong as he was impartial in upholding right. His black-thorn walking-stick was an important factor in the public life of Charlottetown in those days, and woe betide the luckless wight whom he caught loafing on the corners or hanging

around bar-rooms. His methods of exhortation, too, were somewhat peculiar. Ofttimes, in the midst of an impassioned discourse, he would stop short, and fixing with his eye some individual whose conduct had aroused his displeasure, he would proceed to apostrophize the blushing offender, and having administered a scathing rebuke, he would calmly take up the thread of his discourse, and proceed with the same as if nothing unusual had happened. The ladies of the congregation, especially, had to be particularly circumspect, not merely in their conduct, but even in the style and make of their dress. If a young damsel with an eye to the matrimonial market, entered the church arrayed so as to suggest to the priest that she was trying to catch the eye or storm the heart of some inveterate bachelor, she did so at the risk of being summoned to the altar-rail, and there publicly admonished of the folly of her conduct.

Yet despite these oddities, or rather perhaps by reason of them, he acquired a marvellous ascendancy over his people, and in a short time, he was able to collect enough money to defray the expenses rendered necessary by the unfinished state of the church. Having thus manifested his zeal for the beauty of God's house, his next care was to provide a residence for himself. Since the fire at Rosebank he had lived in a rented house, which was neither large nor commodious; and he thought the time had come when a mission so central and so important as Charlottetown, should have a suitable parochial house contiguous to the church. Accordingly, in the beginning of the year 1825, he made known to the people his views of the matter, and announced that, on the following St. Patrick's Day, a collection would be taken up to help defray the cost of the proposed building. The service on St. Patrick's Day was well attended, the church being thronged to the doors, and the collection gladdened the heart of Father Fitzgerald. Persons of all denominations were present, and vied with each other in contributing to so laudable an object. Colonel Ready himself figured in the list of donors, as we glean from the fact that, at a meeting of the congregation held in the afternoon of the same day, a resolution was adopted thanking His Excellency for his "polite letter and donation", and expressing gratitude to those of the other

denominations who “ contributed to increase our slender funds for building a parochial house for the residence of our clergy,”

This was probably the first time that Governor Ready lent the prestige of his name and position to forward Catholic interests in Prince Edward Island, but it certainly was not the last. Many a time indeed throughout his administration, his good dispositions towards the Catholic people found outward expression in acts of genuine kindness. Thus it was that, on the 22nd of April of this year, he appointed Bishop MacEachern a Commissioner of highways, assigning to his supervision a precinct comprising the territory from Lot 38 to Lot 42 inclusive ; and later in the same year, we find him reversing the policy of his predecessor, by appointing a Catholic, Mr. Angus Macdonald, of Three Rivers, to the Commission of the Peace.

It is possible, also, that His Excellency had a part in calling the attention of the Imperial authorities to the importance of the work done by Bishop MacEachern in this portion of the King's dominions, and in convincing them that, though before all things else an apostle of the Lord, he was nevertheless a most potent factor in upholding the arm of the civil law, and promoting the welfare of the country at large. We may add, however, that it is not unlikely too, that this conviction may have grown on them, at least to some extent, from representations made to them in the preceding year by Bishop Macdonnell of Upper Canada, who had gone to England for the express purpose of laying before them the unsatisfactory condition of the Church in certain parts of Canada. From whatever source they gleaned the information, they seem to have awakened about this time to a sense of tardy justice ; for we find in the estimates for defraying the civil establishment of Prince Edward Island for the year 1825, the following item :

“ Allowance to Reverend Æneas MacEachern, Roman Catholic Missionary in the Islands of Prince Edward and Cape Breton, etc., in reward for his meritorious services, £50.0.0 ” ; and this sum the British Government continued to pay each year until his death.

Encouraged by the Governor's kindly dispositions, and perhaps after having taken counsel with him, the Catholic people, with the Bishop

at their head, made in 1825 their first united effort in the cause of Emancipation. Up till this time they had been debarred from a seat in the Legislature, and had not even been allowed to cast a vote at the polls. Though subject to the laws of the country, they had no voice in their enactment, but were forced to bow to the principle of "taxation without representation," a principle now *tabooed* in every country where constitutional government obtains.

In the meantime the Catholic cause was steadily gaining ground in the British Empire. In the Old Country the Catholic Party, led on by the great O'Connell, was carrying on a vigorous and successful campaign, and since the beginning of the century, various measures favorable to Catholics had been carried through the House of Commons. In the neighbouring Island of Cape Breton, a Catholic, Mr. Lawrence Kavanagh, had been elected by the vote of the people, and had been allowed to take his seat in the Legislature through the timely influence of Lord Dalhousie. The promoters of Catholic Emancipation everywhere were growing more formidable in numbers, more fearless in their advocacy, more outspoken in their views, and more confident that the day was not far distant, when the waving folds of the Imperial flag would be, to Catholics and Protestants alike, a symbol of equal rights and equal privileges.

The Catholics of Prince Edward Island were seized with a like enthusiasm. They too felt the time had come to unite their efforts in the cause of civil and religious liberty, and they determined to bring their grievances directly before the Local Legislature, where they had reason to hope the sympathies of a fair-minded Protestant majority would be enlisted in their behalf. The course adopted was to proceed by way of petition, and they were in the act of taking the preliminary steps to this end, when the Legislature was suddenly called for the dispatch of business. Governor Ready had been unexpectedly summoned to England on matters of an urgent nature, and he thought best to convene the Legislature before setting out, for fear his stay in the mother country should be prolonged beyond his expectations. The House accordingly met on the 12th of October, and though the notice was short, we learn from the Records that, on the 18th of the

same month, Mr. Ewen Cameron presented a "petition from nine hundred Roman Catholic inhabitants of this Island, praying that this House would do its part towards removing all invidious and impolitic distinctions on account of their religious belief, and place them on a similar footing with their Protestant fellow-subjects, and thereby unite the inhabitants of this Island in mutual confidence." The petition was read and was made the Order of the Day for Thursday, October 20th. When the House met on October 20th, it went into Committee of the Whole to take into consideration the petition presented by the Catholics, and after some deliberation the Chairman, Mr. Owen, reported : " That from the importance of the subject, and the advanced state of the Session. it is the opinion of this Committee that the further consideration of the petition of the Roman Catholics should be deferred until the next Session, when the same ought to have and is entitled to the serious consideration of the House."

A division having been taken, the report of the Committee was declared agreed to, only one voice being heard in the negative. The dissenting voice was that of Dr. MacAulay, of Belfast, an uncompromising friend of the Catholic cause. He contended that the House should take action at once in the matter, as the claims put forth by the Catholics were so manifestly just that little time should be required for their discussion. Moreover, as it lay in the power of the House to grant the prayer of the petition, he believed it was better to do so without delay, because he feared that bad feelings might be aroused and old prejudices revived, should the question be bandied from mouth to mouth during the recess. But, unfortunately, the majority of the representatives were not as eager as Dr. MacAulay to see the Catholics enter into the full enjoyment of their rights, and were therefore inclined to proceed more slowly. Even Mr. Cameron, who had presented the petition, went over to their way of thinking, and the matter was thus allowed to remain in abeyance till the next session of the Legislature.

The year 1825 went out amid deep mourning in the Diocese of Quebec. The illustrious Bishop, who for nineteen years had administered ecclesiastical affairs throughout the whole of Canada,

died at his residence in Quebec on the 14th of December. Bishop Plessis, in his day, was unquestionably the best known figure of Canadian history. He had travelled the country from Cape Breton Island to the wilds of Upper Canada, had visited every place of consequence in that vast region, had transacted during his visits business of almost every imaginable kind, had met and conversed with persons of every class, creed and character, and all the while kept in close touch with the civil authorities both at home and abroad. Universally known, he was none the less universally admired and beloved. No Bishop of Quebec before his time nor since so completely won the hearts of his own people, and the esteem and respect of those not of the household of faith. The easy condescension of his bearing, his thoughtful regard for the feelings of others, his fatherly solicitude for the welfare of his clergy, his amiable kindness amounting sometimes almost to playfulness, his exquisite sense of the most delicate humour, these and many other qualities of mind and heart made him the most genial and approachable of men; and few, indeed, came within the sphere of his influence, who did not fall easy victims to the captivating graces of his manner.

By his death his Coadjutor, Right Reverend Bernard-Claude Panet, became Archbishop of Quebec, and he chose for his Coadjutor Reverend Joseph Signay, a priest of the Diocese.



MOST REV. B. C. PANET
Archbishop of Quebec
1825 - 1833

CHAPTER XXIX.

CATHOLIC CLAIMS DISCUSSED IN THE PRESS AND IN THE LEGISLATURE.—
CATHOLIC PETITION DEFEATED.

During the years which up till now have engaged our attention, journalism had made but little progress in Prince Edward Island. The only newspaper in the Colony was the *Prince Edward Island Register*, which appeared for the first time on July 26th, 1823. Its issue of February 2nd, 1826, contained a leading article in which reference was made to the Catholic petition, and in which it stated that the paper would take neutral ground with respect to the Catholic claims, but would hold its columns open to all contributors who were willing to discuss the same in a fair and moderate manner.

A controversy was accordingly waged in the columns of the *Register*, and a good deal of bitterness was indulged in ; but it served the good purpose of making the Catholic side of the question better known, and, as a consequence, more fully appreciated.

Campbell, the author of the *History of Prince Edward Island*, himself a Protestant, admits that the Catholic apologists had the best of the argument. Here are his words : “ Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the discussion in its religious aspect, there can be none as to the fact of every argument, advanced against the Roman Catholic’s right to be put on an equal footing with the Protestant in all matters appertaining to civil and religious liberty, being completely demolished by the accomplished advocates of the Roman Catholic claims.” The same author is candid enough to say that, “ while on

the part of Catholics, as the aggrieved party whose rights were tyrannically and persistently disregarded, paroxysms of irritation were the natural result of oppression, no such apology can to the same extent be offered in behalf of their opponents."

One of the most forcible and uncompromising champions of the Protestant side of the controversy wrote over the pen-name of "Protestant Catholic." We here insert a brief summary of one of his letters which, being typical of its class, will serve to show the animus with which Catholics had to contend, and the shallow reasons which moved their opponents in refusing them their common rights as citizens. He begins by calling attention to the fact that the Catholics are said to be now a numerous body, and that this is put forward as a reason for seeking a redress of their grievances. "Protestant Catholic," however, holds the opposite view. He submits that one of the strongest reasons for refusing to grant them the franchise is precisely their great numbers. Protestants in former years regarded the franchise in the hands of Catholics as dangerous to liberty and subversive of Protestant institutions. Has such danger disappeared in these latter years? Not at all. Is it not rather intensified by the comparative increase of the Catholic population? Were they only few in number they could not do much harm; but since they put forward the fact that they have grown numerous in the colony, let us beware of putting power into their hands. The very fact that they were deprived of the franchise, in years gone by, is in itself a stronger reason that they continue so than any argument to the contrary set forth in their recent petition. He next takes up the case of Ireland, where the people have been agitating many years for a redress of such grievances, and concludes with more self-complacency than logic, that to grant favors to Catholics can in no wise conduce to the public weal, or else England had long since departed from her historical traditions to place the Irish people on a footing of equality with the Protestant subjects of the King. From Ireland to Nova Scotia is a long distance, but "Protestant Catholic" makes the journey in two lines, and invites his readers to contemplate the humiliating condition into which that Province has fallen by too much favor shown the Catholic inhabitants.

Now they have a Catholic representative in the Legislature, and "Protestant Catholic" is quite sure that the same state of affairs will soon obtain in Prince Edward Island, if Catholics once get a chance to cast their votes at the polls. Turning his attention more directly to the Catholics of Prince Edward Island, he says that, whilst those who signed the petition may lay claim to respectability, still in general the Catholics of the Island are not as wealthy, respectable or intelligent as the Protestants. Their wealth he pronounces "a miserable subsistence"; their intelligence, "the opinion of their priests." Give them the franchise, and then let a priest ask them to vote only for a coreligionist, and soon, he thinks, the case of Nova Scotia will be duplicated in Prince Edward Island, by a Catholic taking his seat in the Legislature. He rejects with disdain the statement made in the petition to the effect that Catholics are his brethren. See how they differ from Protestants in their view of the Bible; and they even go so far as to maintain that these same Protestants, whom they call brethren, are not true members of the Church of Christ.

Finally he takes up the doctrine of infallibility, and gives as his opinion that such a belief is in itself sufficient to exclude Catholics from the franchise. With the most perfect assurance he makes this sweeping assertion, though from his arguments it is evident that he failed to grasp the intrinsic nature of the dogma he condemns, nor ever understood even in a rudimentary way its true bearing on civil allegiance.

Whilst arguments like the above were being blazoned in the press, and were being met with equal vehemence by the partisans of the Catholic cause, Governor Ready was detained in England by business matters demanding his personal attention, so that he was forced to put off his return till late in the fall, and did not therefore reach Charlottetown till the 10th of December, 1826. A whole year thus passed without a meeting of the Legislature, and the promoters of the Catholic petition were growing impatient of delay. So long a recess, however, was not unusual in Prince Edward Island, as Governor Smith had allowed as many as four years to pass without calling together the people's representatives. But Governor Ready was a man

of a different stamp. His aim was to administer public affairs according to the Constitution, and so, early in the year 1827, a short time after his return from Europe, he called a session of the Legislature.

Having gone through the necessary preliminaries, the House took up the general business of the Colony, and on the 29th of March, the Catholic petition became the order of the day. Mr. Ewen Cameron, in bringing it thus a second time to the notice of his colleagues, made a speech in its favor, and dwelt at some length on the principal objections to the measure contained in the contributions of "Protestant Catholic." Amongst other things Mr. Cameron said that, though he had presented this petition during the previous session, he had consented to let it lie over till now, for two reasons: in the first place, because he had felt the matter was of such paramount importance that it could not receive the consideration it deserved in the dying days of a hurried session; and, in the second place, because he had judged it was better to let sufficient time elapse, so that the electors might have an opportunity of bringing in counter-petitions, if they indeed seriously opposed the extension of the franchise to Catholics. Over a year had since passed, and he was happy to say that no such counter-petition was presented. A discussion had taken place in the Press, it is true, into which much acrimony had been injected, but for himself he was able to discuss the matter calmly and fairly, as his motives were "common rights and common justice." The Catholic people, he contended, are good and loyal subjects; they bear a share of the public burdens; they braved with courage the hardships of the early years of the Colony; they are allowed to serve on juries and fill other responsible positions. Why then should they not vote as well as they do in the other Provinces? He emphasized the fact that the Catholics were so numerous on the Island, and maintained, that it was manifestly unfair to prevent so large and respectable a body of men from taking part in the political affairs of their country. It had been alleged, he added, that priestly influence might tend to subvert existing conditions. But it was utter nonsense to say so. Would not citizens, who were loyal when their rights were denied them, continue in their loyalty when these rights

were restored? Why should they waver in their allegiance to the Government on obtaining full possession of their civil rights, when, during the years of unjust discrimination, they were foremost to fight and die in its defence? Some persons had said that they had no respect for an oath. Why then, he would ask, do they not already vote, and why not take their place in Parliament, since only the Test Oath stands in their way? Having lived amongst Catholics, and having dealt largely with them, he did not hesitate to declare that he found them "as honest, punctual and faithful to engagements as any class of customers." In conclusion, he said that he did not see eye to eye with them in matters of faith, but that had nothing to do with the question now before him. If they worshipped God as they saw fit, and according to the dictates of conscience, that was surely no reason why they should be deprived of their rights. He therefore begged leave to move the following resolution, seconded by Dr. MacAulay:

"That it is the opinion of this House, that the right of voting at Elections of Members to serve in the General Assembly ought to be extended to His Majesty's subjects of the Roman Catholic religion within this Island; and that the Election Law should be altered conformable to this resolution."

The debate that followed was in keeping with the importance of the interests involved. It was conducted with dignity and decorum, and was characterized by a spirit of toleration, in marked contrast to the bitterness which had prevailed while the question was discussed in the press.

No attempt was made to shew that Catholics were unworthy of the franchise, or that the granting of the prayer of their petition would in any way prove detrimental to the State. The Attorney General, in the course of a speech very favorable to the petition, told of his indignation at the last election, when a Catholic, who had asked to poll his vote, was turned out of the Court-house in Charlottetown, while at the same time an emancipated negro was brought in to exercise the privilege thus denied to a white man of property and respectability.

The phase of the question, which gave rise to the most discussion, was the right of the Legislature to deal with it at all, until the Mother Country had taken some definite action upon it. Thus, while some maintained that the House should take immediate action by granting the prayer of the petition, others feared that such a course was beyond the jurisdiction of the Legislature until the matter had been decided in England; and these held that the proper course to pursue was to memorialize the King, and ask for permission to legislate in accordance with the petition of the Catholic inhabitants. Conformably to this view of the case, Mr. Campbell moved the following amendment, seconded by Mr. Hyde: "That a dutiful and humble address be prepared to His Majesty, praying that this House may be permitted to so alter the Law of this Island made and passed in the forty-seventh year of the late King, entitled 'An Act for the better regulation of Elections and to regulate Elections for Members to serve in the General Assembly in future;' that our fellow-subjects of the Roman Catholic persuasion may be enabled to vote for the Election of Members of Assembly on the same terms and under the same qualifications as their Protestant fellow-subjects now do, or under any future law may be required to do."

The amendment was declared lost on division, six members voting in its favor and eight in opposition to it. The House then divided on the main motion, and for the resolution appear the names of the Attorney General Johnston, Cameron, MacAulay, Mabey, Hodgson, Coffin and Cambridge; against it appeared Campbell, MacNeil, Montgomery, Hyde, Dockendorf, Jardine and Bearisto. The parties thus stood seven to seven, and it being a tie, the decision lay with the Speaker who, unfortunately for the Catholic petition, had adopted the views of those favoring an address to the King. He accordingly gave his casting vote against the resolution, and it was forthwith declared lost.

The Speaker at the time was Mr. John Stewart, of Mount Stewart, who was a man of liberal education and of broadminded, enlightened views; but, as the Author of Campbell's History says: "his decision on this occasion cannot be said to have been in accordance with his

general character." It was indeed unfortunate, that he failed to realize the importance of the occasion, or to grasp the splendid possibilities of his position. It lay in his power to raise Prince Edward Island to the proud pre-eminence of being a guiding light to the Mother Country on the question of religious liberty ; but by his blind and untimely decision, he put a brake on the wheels of progress, and the Colony, instead of taking its appointed place in the forefront, was left to trail in the shadowy wake of the great movement.

CHAPTER XXX.

EFFORTS OF BISHOP MACEACHERN TO EDUCATE STUDENTS.— HIS
NEPHEW'S DEATH. — LABORS ON THE MAINLAND.

The defeat of the Catholic petition was a great disappointment to Bishop MacEachern. He had anticipated a different result, as he had been led to believe that a majority of the members was favorable to it, and that its adoption by the Legislature was therefore practically assured. For this reason he was not perhaps so strenuous in its behalf as he would have otherwise been, nor so active in working up the case as circumstances demanded. Hence, when he learned of its rejection he was grievously disappointed, and the more so that he had made so sure of its favorable reception. Moreover, and this added to his chagrin, his intention was not confined to the question of the franchise. Other issues were involved, whose solution depended, at least for the present, on the reception accorded the petition. The obtaining of the franchise was only a part of the plan he had in his mind ; it was in fact only its beginning ; but if this were once favorably settled, it might give the Catholics such a standing as would enable them to secure the removal of other obstacles which stood in the way of their advancement as Catholics. For example, the political recognition of the Catholic people might exercise a salutary influence in Rome and London, and might hasten the day, when Prince Edward Island would be considered of sufficient importance to be cut off from Quebec and be raised to the dignity of an independent Diocese.

For himself personally, Bishop MacEachern coveted neither honors nor position. He would have been well content to spend his whole

lifetime in the rank and file of the subordinate clergy, provided religion were flourishing and souls were saved; but when, in the course of his journeys through the district confided to his supervision, he found whole counties without priests and whole families who had lost the faith, and he himself, though sharing in the responsibility of so many souls, had neither power nor means to cope with existing evils, it is not to be wondered at that he would gladly welcome any measure tending to facilitate the change, which he deemed so necessary to the welfare of the Church in the Maritime Provinces.

Nova Scotia and Upper Canada were now independent, and the two prelates to whom were confided their spiritual administration could act on their own responsibility, and adopt whatever plans they thought conducive to the welfare of their respective flocks. In Bishop MacEachern's district, however, matters were different. To quote his own words, they were "like a ship in irons that will not stay nor wear." So unsatisfactory indeed did he find them, that he says: "At all events we cannot be worse off than we are."

And yet amid circumstances so discouraging he never lost heart. Not only did he attend as well as he was able to the present wants of the missions under his care, but in his zeal for God's glory he turned his thoughts to their future condition, and sought to provide against the day when, through age and infirmity, he would be no longer able to minister to the care of souls. Thus, in the year 1819, he made choice of one of his nephews named Angus MacEachern, in whom he found the early signs of a divine calling, and sent him to the College of Montreal to prepare himself for the priesthood. Though his means were small, he himself assumed all the expenses of the young lad's education, because, as he writes to the Archbishop of Quebec, should the boy fail to come up to his expectations and perhaps lose his vocation, the people could not say, as they did in the case of Ronald Macdonald, that they had paid for his education and received nothing in return.

Another plan which he adopted about this time, with a view to furnishing priests for Prince Edward Island, was to have always some boys under instruction at his home at St. Andrew's. His house,

as already stated, was somewhat larger than an ordinary residence, and it could therefore easily accommodate a few boys in addition to the members of the household. The Bishop himself, when at home, acted the part of teacher and, when duty called him away, he made arrangements that the boys might continue their studies during his absence. This plan served a double purpose: it gave the boys the advantage of a good primary education which was not easily obtained in those days; and it afforded the Bishop an opportunity of studying their dispositions, and if he found that they manifested a desire for the priesthood joined with the dispositions required for that holy state, he hoped to be able to find means of sending them abroad to receive more careful training in some suitable seminary. With this end in view, he wrote an account of his circumstances to the Directors of the Propaganda College in Rome, and asked them, in consideration of the wants of his missions, to grant three or four free scholarships to boys selected by him. In answer to his request he received a letter from the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda, dated December 16th, 1826, stating that they were ready to educate two boys free of cost for the service of the Maritime missions.

He had two boys, Norbert and Eugene MacEachern, the former from Cape Breton, the latter from St. Andrew's, under instruction at the time; but he feared that they were not sufficiently advanced to enter a foreign college, and he therefore wrote to his nephew at Montreal, bidding him return home at once and take charge of their instruction, so that they might be ready to start for Rome in the following summer. His intention was that the nephew, who had already made a year of theology, should accompany the two young lads on their journey, and finish his studies at the Propaganda.

But it was a case of man's proposing and God's disposing. His nephew reached home in the month of September, and had scarcely entered upon his new duties of teacher, when he was seized with an illness which terminated in his death at the Bishop's residence on the 21st of October, 1827.

This was a sad blow to the Bishop. For eight years he had provided for him at great personal sacrifice. His heart was wrapped up in the

young Levite, for he hoped he would one day be the staff of his old age. It seems he was a young man of unusually brilliant parts and of most winning and engaging disposition, dearly beloved by his fellow-students and not less so by his friends and relatives. But, though dear to his friends, he was dearer to God ¹. Such, indeed, are the words we find inscribed on the stone at his grave; words in which the grief-stricken Bishop epitomized the saying of the Wise Man: "For his soul pleased God; therefore He hastened to bring him out of the midst of iniquities" (Wisd. IV. 14).

Bishop MacEachern was in his sixty-ninth year when this great sorrow came to him. He had reached that time of life when most people seek a respite from labor, to compensate themselves for the wasting activities of earlier years. For him, however, no such relief appeared, and by the untimely death of his nephew it was further than ever from his grasp. Thirty-six years had he spent in the Colony, a long period of unceasing toil and unremitting application to duty, and instead of the rest to which age and service entitled him, he must needs encounter hardships and brave dangers in every respect equal to those of his early career. Thus the year 1827 was one of the busiest of his entire life. It was marked by a great deal of sickness amongst the people and, as a consequence, it brought an increase of labor to the missionary. The Lenten season, too, added greatly to his cares, for then every mission in the eastern part of the Island claimed his presence in turn. This must have been a trying experience to a man of his years, especially on account of the difficulties of travel and the poor accommodation available among those whom he served. Some of the older people, in the north-eastern parts of Prince Edward Island, tell how he often improvised a bed on the floor when driven by stress of weather to take shelter in a cottage where there was no accommodation for his reception. With a bundle of straw from the barn and the furs from his sleigh, he would arrange a comfortable shakedown before the open fire-place, and there pass the night in calm repose, while the flickering light from the dying

1 — *Amicis amabilis, Deo amabilior.*

embers on the hearth shed a drowsy radiance over his slumbers. Many a night he spent in this primitive manner, sleeping soundly after the fatigues of the day, and rising betimes refreshed in body and mind, and strengthened to continue his apostolic labors.

Amid privations such as these and many others of which we know not, he ministered to his scattered flock. From settlement to settlement he passed, often indeed from house to house, that all might have an opportunity of approaching the sacraments during the Easter time; and when this had been accomplished at the cost of much toil and exposure, instead of taking the rest which tired nature demanded, he must go to the Mainland on business in connection with the episcopal visitation of this portion of the Diocese. He accordingly crossed over to Nova Scotia, and on the 24th of June, officiated at the consecration of Bishop Fraser, in the Church of St. Ninian, Antigonish. He was the consecrating prelate, and indeed the only Bishop who took part in the ceremony, the part of assistants having been assigned to two priests of La Trappe, Father Francis and Father Vincent, who resided in a monastery of their order, at Tracadie, Nova Scotia.

From Antigonish he proceeded to Halifax, and after a short stay, set out for Annapolis in the hope of finding a vessel in which he might take passage to St. John, New Brunswick; but failing in this, he crossed over to Digby, and remained there till the 19th of July, when he boarded a small vessel bound for St. John. In this latter city he spent about two weeks, attending to the spiritual wants of the people and administering Confirmation to all whom he found prepared for the reception of that sacrament. On the 3rd of August he took passage in a small steamboat to East Port, just beyond the American boundary, and next morning, he went in a bark canoe propelled by two stalwart Micmacs, to visit the Indians of Moose Island; and having conferred with these people about matters pertaining to their well-being, he proceeded up the bay to the town of St. Andrew's. This being a rising town of some importance and the centre of a numerous population, he was kept busy during his stay, as not only the people of the town, but the Indians also assembled

in large numbers to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. From St. Andrew's he returned to St. John, and a few days later, ascended the river to Fredericton, where his duties detained him for about a week. On the 23rd of August he left Fredericton, and started on an overland journey through the woods till he reached the head waters of the Miramichi River, about forty-five miles distant. Here he secured a canoe or dug-out, twenty-four feet long and two feet wide, made from the trunk of a pine tree, and in this frail craft, with only one companion, he descended the river till he reached the settlements nearest its source. The same labors awaited him here and in the adjoining missions, and so consumed his time that the autumn was well advanced before he got back to his home in Prince Edward Island.

He had intended, during his stay in St. John, to pay a visit to the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, for the purpose of conferring with him about the wants of the Catholic population in that Province ; but His Excellency was unfortunately confined to his house by illness at that time, and the Bishop, therefore, had to leave the city without having had the pleasure of an interview.

But on his return home he prepared a memorial setting forth the condition of his flock in New Brunswick, and making some suggestions which he deemed conducive to the welfare of the Province at large. Amongst other things, he says : " The greatest part of the coast from Restigouche down to Cape Torment is inhabited by Catholics ; also Memramcook, Petitcodiac and some scattered settlements between that and St. John. We have a numerous congregation at the Capital ; a considerable number at Fredericton, some at St. Andrew's, on the River Ste. Croix, and on St. Andrew's Bay." The injury sustained by the Province from the scarcity of priests did not escape his notice, and he takes care to point it out as follows : " Large parcels of the vacant lands in the interior would be taken up by our own subjects who, for want of clergymen of their own faith, pass to the American States, and perhaps, in the event of war, must be employed against their country and relatives."

He expresses a desire of establishing a preparatory school, where

boys might be taught the primary branches ; and then, if they manifested an inclination for the priesthood, they might be sent to the Seminary near Aberdeen, to be trained directly under the eye of one of the Scottish Bishops. “ This,” he says, “ would form and cement a continued intercourse with the Mother Country ” from which he believes a great benefit would accrue to the Province, for he adds : “ A succession of clergy well attached to Government would train up their hearers as peaceable and useful subjects.”

He then takes up the case of the Indians, of whom he has this to say : “ As for the Indian tribes, it is of no use to expect to make Protestants of them ; for let them once abandon their religion, which keeps a restraint on their conscience, and Government has no further hold of them. I was informed there was a considerable sum of money belonging to that Province, for the use of the Indians ; also that Government wishes to settle them. If I am allowed to give an opinion, it would be to get the clergymen who occasionally attend them in their spiritual affairs, to have the distribution of the gift or donation that is made to them, with regular statements of the mode of application ; and if it is intended to make farmers of them, to propose premiums to every Indian who would cut, burn, roll, fence and plant a specified quantity of land. Some provisions during the performance of this arduous labour would be necessary. The clergyman would see that the bounty should be truly earned before it was conferred. They would have confidence in their pastors, which I find they have not, and never will, in others who superintend those matters. They ought never to be employed in war.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

WANT OF CLERGY.—NEGOTIATIONS CONCERNING A DIVISION OF THE DIOCESE OF QUEBEC.

In a previous chapter, we referred at some length to the negotiations that preceded the first division of the Diocese of Quebec. We then saw, that the plan proposed by Bishop Burke to attain this end had been adopted only in the case of Nova Scotia, whilst the proposal made by Archbishop Plessis had been applied to the rest of Canada. The new order of things thus established fell far short of removing the unsatisfactory condition of ecclesiastical affairs in the district assigned to Bishop MacEachern, and so the want of priests and the apparent apathy of the Bishops of Quebec to furnish them continued to retard the progress of Catholicity in Prince Edward Island. Since Bishop MacEachern's arrival in the Colony, this question added not a little to his daily anxieties, and now it seemed further than ever from a definite and satisfactory solution. "The spiritual wants of this part of the Diocese," he writes in 1825, "are such that if some prompt and effectual means are not adopted for raising a succession of clergy, the spiritual condition of our people will become deplorable." More than sixty years had elapsed since the conquest of Canada, and Prince Edward Island had yet only three clergymen, and of these only one was a native. Father Fitzgerald could speak neither Gaelic nor French, and could on that account render no service to the mass of the Catholic population. He spent his time, therefore, almost entirely in Charlottetown, where the Irish people principally lived, and whom he directed in the way of salvation, as Bishop MacEachern facetiously remarked, "in his own canonical way."

Father Macdonald resided principally at Miscouche ; but Rustico, Egmont Bay, Mount Carmel, Cascumpee and Tignish claimed much of his time and were in turn cheered and blessed by his ministrations.

The Bishop himself was always on the move. Now in Cape Breton, now in the Magdalen Islands, and now in New Brunswick or in the missions of Prince Edward Island, he knew no repose, and seldom indeed did he enjoy the quiet of home life in his own house at St. Andrew's. Time and again he appealed to Quebec for assistance, but always in vain. Every letter he sends to the Archbishop makes mention of the needs of the Colony, and pleads the cause of his flock, calmly at times, but occasionally in words that show how his heart was filled with sorrow at the sight of their spiritual condition. In asking for priests he mentions a certain Father Paisley who had been highly spoken of by Reverend John Chisholm ; but instead of coming to Prince Edward Island, Father Paisley was kept at Quebec to labor among the Irish emigrants.

As time passed in this way, and no priests came from Quebec to Prince Edward Island, complaints began to be heard in the Scotch missions, more especially at St. Andrew's. Nor were these complaints without good and solid reasons. Those people had paid dearly for Father Macdonald's education. Many a time, when the Seminary of Quebec was clamoring for money, had they stinted themselves and their families in order to raise the necessary funds ; and all the while they were buoyed up with the promise that Father Macdonald would one day come to them, and repay by his attention to their spiritual welfare, the sacrifices which they had made in his behalf. Now that he has been ordained, the promise has not been kept. Instead of coming to them, Father Macdonald must be placed in the French missions to labor for a people who never contributed to the cost of his education, and who even grew insolent in their refusal, when asked to cooperate with the people of the other missions in adopting a plan for the education and support of clergy. Well might they ask by what right had they been refused the sacraments, if the object was to procure priests for the Acadians ; why did not these bear a share in the contributions, if they were to enjoy not a share but the whole of

the benefits ; or why did not their own countrymen in Canada supply their spiritual wants, instead of giving them over entirely to the charity of strangers ?

A still greater cause of alarm confronted them in the fact, that their condition, instead of improving, seemed to become more irksome from year to year. Bishop MacEachern was now seldom at home. When needed by the sick they knew not where to find him. With much labor and expense they had built churches in the various missions, but seldom is their mournful stillness broken by the voice of sacrifice, for the Bishop must be away in other places, doing the work of the Bishop of Quebec. Surely if they are thus deprived of his services, the least they have a right to expect is, that a Canadian priest be sent to the Acadian Missions, and Father Macdonald be appointed to the spiritual charge of the people who generously contributed to his education.

In bringing the matter to the notice of the Archbishop, Bishop MacEachern says : “ Had you sent Mr. Paisley down to this Island, I would have got Reverend Donald Macdonald up this way, not only in my absence but constantly, so that some one might be between this (St. Andrew’s), East Point, St. Alexis and Three Rivers : but now, as I am alone in all this end of the Island, I do not expect to be one month of the winter at St. Andrew’s, even in the supposition that the people may be healthy during the ensuing season. Our people grumble,” he continues, “ because Mr. Donald Macdonald is employed among the French of the westward, and therefore, to avoid throwing blame on me, if you do not send Mr. Paisley, who may be of infinite use to the Celts, and Irish and English of the West, at least send a Canadian who can speak English perfectly well.” This appeal like so many others proved unavailing ; the most that could be obtained from the Archbishop was a declaration to the effect that the Catholics of Prince Edward Island will look in vain to Quebec for spiritual assistance, as their only hope of obtaining priests is centered in the children of the Province ¹. In replying to the above

1 — “ Quant à l’Isle du Prince-Edouard, je n’y vois d’autres ressources que celles que vous pouvez tirer des enfants mêmes du pays.” Archbishop Plessis, July 13th, 1825).

Bishop MacEachern says that the statement made by the Archbishop is mortifying, and in a burst of pardonable indignation he asks : “ What has Canada ever done for this Island since the Conquest ? What provision for the Acadian settlers in spirituals before our people arrived on the Island ? And what has been done for us since ? And can Your Grace for a moment say that we ought not to have a share in the wealth of the Canadian Seminaries.”

When Archbishop Panet assumed the administration of diocesan affairs Bishop MacEachern renewed his appeals for assistance, and in a letter dated December 21st, 1826, he says : “ I am far from reflecting on you for the want of pastors in this Island ; but when I reflect that our people who have settled on this Island, as well as the Acadians since the year 1772, have never had any spiritual assistance from Quebec excepting the time allowed to Messrs Beaubien and Cécile, I cannot help remarking that a want of sympathy existed somewhere.”

Besides the want of clergy Bishop MacEachern encountered other difficulties, which on account of his dependence on the Archbishop of Quebec, he was powerless to remove or remedy. Troubles of a serious nature arose in certain missions of New Brunswick and Cape Breton, owing to the fact that the missionaries sent to them were foreigners, whom the Archbishop would not employ at home for fear of scandal, but whom he did not hesitate to send to the Maritime Provinces far from the centre of authority. Hence, when things went wrong in their missions, Bishop MacEachern could not cope with the difficulty, as he had not sufficient authority to adopt coercive measures, and as a result anarchy not unfrequently prevailed to the great scandal of the people. Pained at his inability to remedy such evils and wearied with the false position in which he was placed, he thus writes Archbishop Panet :

“ If nothing is left to me but a responsibility without authority, time lost to my flock, expenses without remuneration, a decision without effect, it is high time for me to mind solely the spiritual concerns of the places where I am stationed near thirty-nine years, and perform none of the *odiosa*, which I find would be prudent in me

to leave the others; because, from different circumstances, it appears to me that stumbling-blocks are from different quarters thrown in the way of my doing that good to this district which it stands in great need of." Referring to the same matter in another letter he says: "From what usage I have met with elsewhere, a suspicious person might be induced to suspect that the clergy in my district may have been taught to disregard my injunctions."

From so many extracts from the letters of Bishop MacEachern it can readily be seen, that the appointment of a Bishop for Prince Edward Island and for the neighbouring places did not solve the problem of religious development with which the Catholics had to deal, and it is quite clear that the plan proposed by Bishop Burke and approved at the time by Bishop MacEachern was much better calculated to achieve beneficial results, giving as it would have done, to the Church in each Province, a Superior invested with sufficient authority to decide whatever questions might arise in the missions.

In Upper Canada matters were no better, for the Bishop of Rhesina was as much hampered in his actions as the Bishop of Rosen. He too was in a position of responsibility without authority, and could not take the initiative in moulding ecclesiastical affairs in his district, except with the consent of the Archbishop of Quebec. Being a man of action and in great favor with the civil authorities, Bishop Macdonnell decided to pay a visit to England and afterwards to Rome, to obtain, if possible, a separation of his district from the Diocese of Quebec. He communicated his intention to Bishop MacEachern, who charged him to inform the British Government, and the Congregation of the Propaganda how matters stood in Prince Edward Island and the other places supposed to be under his jurisdiction. Bishop Macdonnell set out for Europe to negotiate a separation. In London he found matters to his liking, but in Rome he met with so many obstacles that he was obliged to return home before the question had been definitively settled. When he reached his home in Upper Canada he wrote a letter to Bishop MacEachern, in which, after having mentioned a letter he had sent him from Rome, he goes on to

say : “ I think I mentioned to you the wish and even anxiety of Earl Bathurst ¹ that Upper Canada should be erected into a Diocesan Bishopric, in order to be independent of that of Quebec, and his full and entire consent that New Brunswick, the Islands of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Nova Scotia should form one independent Diocese. To this I saw no difficulty, as Bishop Fraser might become your Coadjutor *cum successione*.” Further on he speaks of having proposed this arrangement to the Secretary of the Propaganda, but that the Cardinals feared that Bishop MacEachern, at the head of a Diocese so poor, would not be able to provide for himself in a becoming manner, and at the same time support a seminary for the education of clergy. For this reason a letter was sent from Rome to Bishop MacEachern, asking him to forward a statement of the probable revenue at his disposal, in the event of a change being effected in his district. Bishop MacEachern sent an answer without delay in terms which went to show, that he entertained no fears regarding his own support, nor regarding the chances of educating priests for the missions of the Maritime Provinces.

The efforts of the two Bishops to bring about a separation remained ineffectual for some time. Objections were made to the proposition with the result that it could not be carried out as soon as its advocates desired, nor as soon as the welfare of religion demanded. Bishop Macdonnell, in his letter already quoted, says the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda and the Pope were in favor of the division, and even Archbishop Plessis himself at first consented to it ; but on second thought, it seems His Grace of Quebec adopted a different view, and put so many difficulties in the way that a long delay occurred before a settlement was arrived at. The stand thus taken on the question by Archbishop Plessis was no surprise to Bishop MacEachern, for he kept himself well informed of the drift of ecclesiastical affairs at Quebec, and hence, in a letter dated December 17th, 1825, written to a friend in Rome, we find the following reference to the Archbishop's action in this connection : “ I believe that the Right

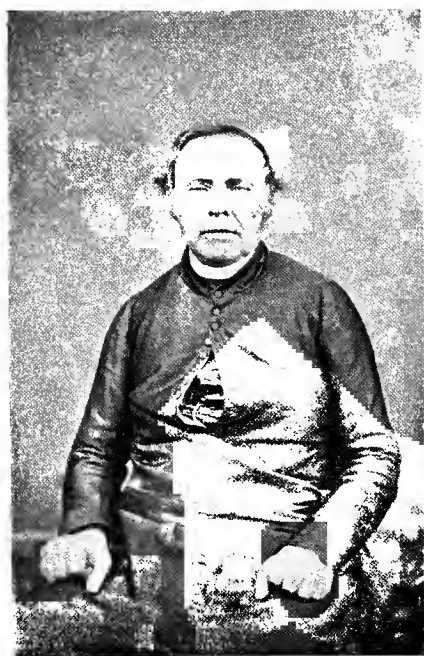
1 — British Colonial Secretary at the time.

Honorable Earl Bathurst is sincere in the proposed plans, and that said Nobleman will give his support to it; for which we are certainly indebted to His Lordship. But I am far from thinking that the Archbishop of Quebec was ever desirous of adopting the plan in question. For I have seen his correspondence with the Holy See on the subject, his remarks on our inability to provide clergymen, also the state Nova Scotia would be in, in case of a separation. And, moreover, when at Rome, he took every pains and means in his power in case the late Dr. Burke should die without appointing a coadjutor, to have Nova Scotia re-annexed to Quebec on the same footing as this Island is. I have all this in black and white. And yet, since the year 90, there never was a Canadian priest in Nova Scotia but three, and they but for a short time in succession."

Whatever may have been the wishes of Archbishop Plessis, the Vicariate Apostolic of Nova Scotia did not merge into the Diocese of Quebec on the death of Bishop Burke. Neither was it annexed to the other Maritime Provinces to form a separate Diocese, as suggested by Bishop Macdonnell. To the great detriment of religion, it was allowed to remain for almost five years in the anomalous condition of a body without a head, till the Holy See at length came to a decision in the matter, and in the month of June, 1825, Reverend William Fraser, of Antigonish, was named Vicar Apostolic of Nova Scotia, and Titular Bishop of Tanen.

Early in the following year was accomplished the second dismemberment of the Diocese of Quebec. On the 27th of January, 1826, the Holy See established a new ecclesiastical boundary which separated Upper Canada from the rest of the Diocese, and Right Reverend Alexander Macdonnell laid aside the title of Bishop of Rhesina to be henceforth known as Bishop of Kingston.

Prince Edward Island, however, remained in its former condition. It had to wait yet a while before Rome signed its declaration of independence, and Bishop MacEachern continued in his position of helplessness until better counsels prevailed.



REV. SYLVAIN PERRY

CHAPTER XXXII.

EVENTS IN THE DIFFERENT MISSIONS. — FATHER PERRY ORDAINED. —
TWO BOYS GO TO ROME.

The history of a people is usually very unequal as to the apparent importance of its various epochs. Sometimes events seem to crowd each other in such abundance as to embarrass the writer by the wealth of matter from which he has to choose, whilst at other times, nothing of consequence appears to give coloring to the historical landscape, or stand out in relief from the background of minor happenings.

The Catholic Church, however, does not aim at attracting the notice of the world. Her greatest triumphs have been achieved in secret, and have remained unknown save only to God. Miracles, it is true, occasionally appear and excite the wonder of a generation; extraordinary conversions too, like that of St. Paul, sometimes occur amid circumstances of great publicity; but such cases are exceptional and form only a small part of the work carried on by Holy Church. The principal results of her mission lie too deep to catch the vulgar eye: they are hidden away in the closed pages of the Book of Life, and cannot be revealed till the Trumpet of the Archangel shall summon all mankind to the last great general confession.

This truth is aptly illustrated by the history of the Church in Prince Edward Island during the year 1828. It presents no stirring events around which the ordinary occurrences of every-day life would naturally group themselves, and may be said to have been almost

monotonous in its continued sameness. The Church, however, was by no means idle. She kept the noiseless tenor of her way, and won souls to grace by the quiet of gentle persuasiveness rather than by the dazzling splendor of outward display.

In Charlottetown some changes were noticeable in the general aspect of ecclesiastical affairs. Father Fitzgerald was still at the head of the mission, and his administration had been marked by substantial progress. The parochial house in which he lived, the interior finish of the church which had been his first care on arriving on the Island, and a goodly number of vestments provided for the service of the altar, all bore testimony to his zeal for the beauty of God's house.

Nor were his activities confined to temporal concerns. The spiritual interests of his flock, too, claimed much of his time, and in his own peculiar manner, he was able to accomplish a great deal of good amongst the people. He was particularly active in promoting the virtue of temperance, and not without reason, for Charlottetown, in his day, was notorious for the number of its taverns, and for the facilities it afforded the liquor-dealer to ply his unholy traffic. Against this evil Father Fitzgerald inveighed in language strong and expressive, and the better class of the community applauded his efforts, though they did not always approve his methods.

In the Acadian missions, much good was being accomplished through the painstaking devotedness of Father Macdonald. At Tignish he was now saying Mass in a new church ¹, begun in 1826, and which in size and appearance was more in keeping with the respect due the Holy Sacrifice than the little log building, which had served for the purpose wellnigh a quarter of a century.

A similar improvement had been effected at Fifteen Point. The little building put up there in the time of Father Cécile's visits to the mission, soon become inadequate to accommodate a people who had increased with marvellous rapidity within the last few years; and a new church was accordingly begun in 1827, which, within a year, was ready for occupation ². It was a large building for that day and

1 — Now St. Mary's Hall.

2 — Now the parochial hall.

for the circumstances of the people, and served its purpose comfortably for many years.

At Egmont Bay, too, Father Macdonald had been busy. Extensive repairs had been made to the church, some of which had been rendered necessary by an untoward accident which had occurred a few years previous to 1828. This church, as we have elsewhere stated, had been hurriedly put up to replace the one destroyed by fire. It contained no galleries at first; but in the course of time one was added, which extended from side to side across the rear of the building. It would seem that due care had not been exercised in its construction, either because the fastening was defective or the timber was not of the necessary size and strength.

In those days Mass was seldom said in a mission, and when it became known that a priest would be in a certain place on Sunday, people came from far and near to assist at the Holy Sacrifice. Many would arrive on the day preceding, whilst not a few consumed the greater part of the night on the road. In this way the little church would be filled to overflowing, though it was amply large for the people of the mission itself. On a certain day Father MacDonald was saying Mass at Egmont Bay, and people had assembled in crowds for the occasion. Every bench was occupied, and the aisles, too, held their quota of eager worshippers. The later arrivals found the church crowded, and pushed their way up to the gallery, where they shouldered one another in their desire to catch a glimpse of the priest at the altar. The Mass proceeded amid the hush of silent worship, till the little bell rang out the approach of the solemn moment of the consecration, when suddenly a crash echoed through the building, followed by a scene of indescribable confusion. As the people sank on their knees at the sound of the bell, the timbers supporting the gallery broke under the strain, and a number of those who were kneeling above were thrown amongst the people below. Fortunately the gallery was not high, and it was so constructed that it held fast to the rear wall, whilst the front part slowly fell to the floor; and on this account the people were not violently thrown down, but rather slipped down

an inclined plane, so that only two or three were hurt, and these not seriously.

Father Macdonald, pausing in the Mass, turned round and spoke a few re-assuring words to the panic-stricken congregation. Quiet having been restored, he went on with the sacrifice amid the thanksgiving of the people whose escape from serious injury seemed nothing short of miraculous ¹. The damage to the church was soon afterwards repaired, and the gallery replaced in such a way as to preclude the possibility of a similar accident.

In the session of 1828 the Legislature of the Island made another attempt to extend the Franchise to Catholics. A bill was introduced to amend the Election Law of the Colony, and on the 25th of April, whilst the discussion was in progress. Mr. Hodgson, one of the members for Charlottetown, moved the following resolution :

“ Resolved : That it is the opinion of this House, that so much and such parts of the Act entitled : ‘ An Act to repeal an Act made and passed in the 41st year of his present Majesty’s reign entitled an Act for the better regulation of Elections, and to regulate Elections for members to serve in General Assembly, in future,’ as render persons of the Roman Catholic Religion ineligible to vote at Elections for representation in the General Assembly of this Island, be repealed and the qualifications of electors raised.”

When a vote was taken there appeared in favor of the resolution the Attorney General, Messrs. Hodgson, Coffin, Mabey and Cambridge, whilst those who were opposed to it were Messrs. Owen, MacNeill, Campbell, Dockendorf, Jardine, Bearisto, Montgomery, Hyde and Nelson.

A majority having thus declared against the resolution, the question of Catholic Emancipation received another temporary check at the hands of our Colonial Legislature.

The most important event to be recorded in our history for the

1 — The injured were taken to the house of Jacques Bernard near the Church, when bleeding was resorted to, and they soon recovered.

year 1828 is unquestionably the ordination of Reverend Sylvain Perry, in the Church of St. Andrew's, on the 28th of June.

During the years of his preparation for the holy priesthood, he had not been a stranger to the ups and downs which were the lot of the students sent from the Lower Provinces to the Canadian colleges.

Father Cécile, as we have seen, received no authority from the Bishop of Quebec to compel the Acadians to contribute towards the maintenance of young Perry, and he was therefore often embarrassed to find the means of defraying expenses at college. On the other hand, the College of Nicolet could ill-afford to board him gratuitously, as the institution had no fixed revenue for such a purpose. Hence, from the very first, his position was very uncertain. But after the visit of Bishop MacEachern to Canada in 1821, young Perry's chances of free education sensibly diminished, owing to a remark thoughtlessly dropped by the Bishop on that occasion.

It seems that His Lordship had boasted of the fertility of the soil on Prince Edward Island, and of the enormous crops that were raised, especially in certain sections of the country. As an instance of this truth, he mentioned the number of bushels of wheat raised in the preceding year by the father of Sylvain Perry at Tignish, and dwelt at some length on the success that had been achieved by many of the Acadians in various parts where they had settled.

Bishop MacEachern's boasting almost cost young Perry his position ; for the authorities concluded at once, and not without apparent reason, that a man who could raise so much wheat should be able to contribute more generously to the college, in which his son was receiving the blessings of a good education.

The fate of Messrs. Chisholm and MacLeod loomed up before the unlucky Sylvain, when Father Cécile came to his assistance, and generously enabled him to prosecute his studies to the end.

After his ordination Father Perry accompanied Bishop MacEachern to New Brunswick, where business of importance demanded the prelate's attention, and on their return he was appointed to the pastoral charge of Tignish, Cascumpec, Mount Carmel and Egmont Bay, thus taking from the shoulders of Father Macdonald a portion of

the burden, which he had borne so patiently for several years, and affording the people of those remote missions better facilities for the practice of their religious duties than they had enjoyed since the Conquest of Canada.

As the year 1828 came to a close, two boys, Norbert and Eugene MacEachern, were on their way to Rome to take up their studies in the College of the Propaganda. They were to have gone in the early summer, but were unable to secure a passage, and so, after a delay of some months, a favorable opportunity presented itself, and they set out late in the autumn and reached their destination in the beginning of the following year.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FATHER FITZGERALD'S DEPARTURE.—LEGISLATURE PETITIONED FOR A
GRANT FOR A COLLEGE.—CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.—
THE BISHOP OF ROSEN BECOMES BISHOP
OF CHARLOTTETOWN.

In the year 1829 Charlottetown had grown to a position of importance. Its population was not less than three thousand souls, and its trade was considerable. Nor did it aim at commercial prosperity alone. It kept abreast of the times, and could boast of a large share of culture and social refinement.

Its Catholic population, too, shared in the general progress and kept even pace with their more favored fellow-citizens. They had profited by the educational advantages within their reach, and could count in their ranks persons who would have shone in a larger and more pretentious community. In latter years especially many emigrants had arrived from Ireland, and these, in many instances, were men whose character and social standing added no little prestige to the Catholic portion of the population.

Father Fitzgerald was growing older, and his eccentricities, instead of diminishing, became more pronounced with the lapse of years. He had accomplished much good in the mission, but he had done so in his own peculiar way, and many of his flock, especially the later arrivals, were growing tired of his primitive methods. His manner of dealing with the people was not calculated to inspire them with great respect for religion. It was rather of a kind to offend sensitive minds ; and howsoever well it might have suc-

ceeded in the beginning of his missionary career, it was certainly unsuited to the changed conditions of later years. What the people now required was to be led, not driven; to be guided along the path of duty, not bullied into sullen obedience; and it was therefore clear to Bishop MacEachern, that the welfare of religion demanded a change in the spiritual administration of the parish of Charlottetown.

With a man like Father Fitzgerald, however, remonstrance was wellnigh useless. It is always difficult to change or correct habits that are long-standing and ingrained; and it was not to be supposed that Father Fitzgerald could, without violence to himself, turn from the path he had trodden so long, to adopt a line of conduct which, after all, may have appeared to him more in the nature of an innovation than a necessity.

At all events dissatisfaction existed in the mission, and differences of opinion arose between the Bishop and priest, which finally resulted in the latter resigning his position as pastor of Charlottetown.

He must have come to this decision rather hurriedly, as he gave his superior no warning of his intention: but on the 18th of February, as Bishop MacEachern chanced to come to Charlottetown, Father Fitzgerald left the parochial house and went to live with a private family. Bishop MacEachern informed the Archbishop of Quebec of Father Fitzgerald's resignation, and added: "He says Mass still. When he gave up his missionary charge, he told me he would retire to his convent in Lisbon, where he is much more fit to be than here."

Father Fitzgerald remained in Charlottetown about four months after he had given up charge of the mission. On the 23rd of June he took passage for Portugal, and thus ended his career in Prince Edward Island.

By his departure certain changes became necessary. Father Perry assumed charge of Miscouche together with all the missions west of that point, so that the district depending on his pastoral care comprised almost the whole of Prince County. Father Macdonald took up his residence in Charlottetown, but still retained the mission of Rustico and extended his pastoral labors eastwardly as far as Vernon River. In the early years of the century, the people of this latter

mission had built a small log church on the north shore of Pownal Bay, for which they secured a site on August 27th, 1804¹. Those who subsequently came to the neighbourhood did not take up land so near to Pownal Bay, but settled further to the east in the direction of Orwell Bay and Vernon River, and, therefore, when by the lapse of time a larger church became necessary, a new site had also to be chosen for the greater convenience of the people. Accordingly, in November, 1829, Bishop MacEachern leased twelve acres of land from the estate of the late Governor Fanning, situated on Lot 49, near the upper waters of Vernon River. Here a new church was speedily erected, which was subsequently enlarged, and finally gave place to the present stately parish church of St. Joachim's.

Early in this year the Legislature of the Island met for the despatch of business. Among the questions that came up for consideration was the advisability of effecting a change in the system of public instruction, so as to afford the youth of the country a better opportunity of acquiring the benefits of education. Bishop MacEachern, ever mindful of the interests of his flock, deemed this a favorable time to advance a claim for a government grant in aid of a Catholic college, and he embodied his views in a letter addressed to the Governor in Council, which was laid before the House by His Excellency on the 14th of March.

The Committee appointed by the House to go into the entire question of education reported as follows :

“ Resolved : That it is the opinion of the Committee that a select committee be appointed to prepare a specific plan on which a bill may be founded for promoting Classical Education in this Colony.

“ The Committee having had under consideration a message from His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, relative to a letter from the Right Reverend Æneas MacEachern, Bishop of Rosen, on the subject of a Grammar School, at St. Andrew's, and soliciting a salary for an Ecclesiastic to conduct the same, to which was appended a copy of said letter ;

1 — This site consisted of four acres of land bought in equal shares from John Hayly and John Macdonald.

“ Resolved : That as the Committee have decided that the establishment under consideration of a Seminary for classical Education in Charlottetown shall be quite free and open to the youth of all persuasions, they cannot at present recommend any sum for the support of a Grammar School at St. Andrew's under the tuition of Catholic clergymen.”

This resolution having been adopted by the House, the question was thus summarily disposed of, much to the disappointment of Bishop MacEachern who, without some pecuniary aid from the Government, found it extremely difficult to establish a college for the education of clergy.

In the same session the Legislature adopted the report furnished by Bishop MacEachern concerning the state of the roads in the district assigned to him as commissioner, thus showing that, though unwilling to grant him or his flock any special or even ordinary privileges, it was not adverse to profiting by his services in the administration of public affairs.

Another example of this is furnished us in the course of this year, when Bishop MacEachern was appointed a Justice of the Peace by His Excellency Governor Ready.

Since the Bishop's arrival in Prince Edward Island he had been general peacemaker for the Catholic people. When difficulties arose of a nature to justify an appeal to the Law, the interested parties would usually await the visit of the Bishop in order to submit the matter to his judgment; and this was done with the assurance that he would not only succeed in finding a solution to the difficulty, but that he would do so in a manner to convince both sides that his decision was just.

Protestants, too, had recourse to him in similar cases, and invariably bowed in respectful submission to his decision. Governor Ready recognized from the first, what an immense amount of good accrued to the country from the labors of a man so enlightened, so disinterested and so full of Christian charity; and, in order to stamp his decisions with the seal of civil authority, he named him Justice of the Peace by a commission dated June 3rd, 1829.

The present year is memorable throughout the Catholic world on account of the adoption of Catholic emancipation by the Parliament of Great Britain. After years of wearisome agitation and many discouraging reverses, the Catholics of the Empire at length entered on their rights as citizens. By one decisive blow the chains that had long bound them were broken, and there dawned for the Church a new era in which "justice and peace met and embraced." Public sentiment with respect to the Catholic claims had so changed in those latter years that, when on March 5th the Honorable Mr. Peel rose in his place, in the House of Commons, to move the resolution in favor of Catholic emancipation, he was listened to with profound attention for the four hours during which his speech lasted, and was cheered to the echo on resuming his seat. A reception no less cordial was tendered the Duke of Wellington when he proposed the measure in the House of Lords. He was accorded a respectful hearing and was frequently applauded during his speech on that occasion. The measure thus passed both Houses with substantial majorities and received the royal assent on the 13th of April.

The result was at once communicated to Governor Ready in the following despatch :

" Downing Street, 4th May, 1829."

" SIR :—I have the honor herewith to enclose the copy of an Act, which has recently passed in Parliament, for relieving His Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects from all Civil and Military disabilities, with certain specified exceptions.

" I apprehend that this Act must be understood as extending to the Colonies, though certainly there is no positive declaration to that effect. But to remove all possibility of doubt on so important a subject, it will be proper that you should recommend to the Legislature of Prince Edward Island to pass an Act declaring that this Statute does extend to, and is in force in that Colony.

" I have, etc.,

" Signed), G. MURRAY,

" Secretary of State for the Colonies.

" Lieutenant Governor Ready, etc."

Before the above despatch reached Governor Ready, the House had been prorogued, and it was therefore too late to act on the suggestion made by the Colonial Secretary and the matter was left over till the next session of the Legislature.

Civil emancipation throughout the Empire was closely followed by ecclesiastical emancipation in Prince Edward Island. Rome at length decided that the time had come to cut off the whole of the Maritime Provinces from the Diocese of Quebec, and establish a new bishopric with independent jurisdiction; and, on the 11th August, Charlottetown was raised to the dignity of an Episcopal See, with Right Reverend Angus Bernard MacEachern as its first Bishop. In the new order of things, his jurisdiction extended over Prince Edward Island, the Magdalen Islands and New Brunswick; but he was freed from the obligation of attending to the people of Cape Breton, that Island having been annexed to the Vicariate of Nova Scotia.

News travelled slowly in those days, and Bishop MacEachern was a long time in ignorance of the change. It was not indeed till the following year that the Papal Bulls conferring the new title on him reached Prince Edward Island.

This event is one of the most important to claim our attention. With it, indeed, the history of the Diocese may be said properly to begin. Heretofore a part of the Diocese of Quebec, and far removed from the centre of authority, it had received but scant attention at the hands of those whose duty it was to feed the flock of the Lord. Excepting in certain rare and isolated instances, it had been left to its own resources; for the priests who came or were sent remained only a short time: a fact not to be wondered at, as it required men of truly apostolic spirit to devote themselves till death to the care of souls in a region so wild and uncultivated. Fortunate it was that during that time Providence raised up a priest to cultivate this neglected portion of the Lord's vineyard. The people of the present day, in truth, have good reason to bless the memory of Bishop MacEachern, who in the darkest days of our history stood alone, driving back the waves of error and indifference that threatened to inundate the land, holding up the cross to guide his people like a pillar of fire

amid the darkness that surrounded them, and laying deep and firm the foundation of religion, over which is reared the superstructure of present prosperity. And now that he had stood bravely at his post for wellnigh forty years, and that the allotted three score and ten had brought to him the infirmities of age, it were meet that he should be permitted to enjoy a respite from arduous labor for the remainder of his lifetime ; but no, instead of the needed repose, he must gird himself again, and go forth with new cares and new responsibilities to do battle for God and for Holy Church. With the heroism of soul that had always distinguished him, the Bishop of Charlottetown entered on his new career. Undeterred by years and undaunted by labors, he quails not at the prospect before him ; but grasping the crozier with a determined hand, he begins a pontificate which proved, alas ! only too brief for the welfare of our Holy Religion.



RT. REV. ANGUS B. MACEachERN
Bishop of Charlottetown

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CATHOLICS SUCCEED TO THEIR RIGHTS AS CITIZENS.—FORT AUGUSTUS SETTLED.—FATHER JOHN MACDONALD—FIRST CATHOLIC ELECTED TO THE ASSEMBLY.—A GENERAL ELECTION.—BISHOP MAC-EACHERN TAKES FORMAL POSSESSION OF HIS SEE.

Postal communication, in the days which now claim our attention, was in a rude and unsatisfactory condition. News travelled slowly, and hence, though Charlottetown had been raised to the rank of an independent see in August, no word of the change reached Bishop MacEachern till towards the close of the year. And even then, he did not receive official information of his new appointment, but learned of it only incidentally by a private letter from a friend in Rome.

A short time afterwards he wrote to Archbishop Panet telling him that he had learned of the change in their ecclesiastical relations, and asking for a continuance of the kindly interest which His Grace had hitherto manifested towards this part of the Diocese. His letter, dated February 9th, 1830, goes on to say : “ I was informed of the arrangements respecting these districts by a private communication from Rome, two months ago, and expected my Bulls via Quebec... How soon I will receive them I will write to Your Grace, and although a local division has taken place, we must co-operate, as far as circumstances and other means will allow, to advance the cause of religion in our different situations.”

The year 1830 witnessed the final settlement of the question of extending the franchise to the Catholics of Prince Edward Island. Mooted for the first time in 1825, it had since come up occasionally

bringing with it in every instance a certain amount of ill-feeling, that tended to perpetuate a state of mutual distrust between the Catholic and Protestant portions of the population. But the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill by the British Parliament, and the subsequent message of the Colonial Secretary on the subject made it clear, that the Legislature of the Island would now have to take definite action in the matter, and accordingly, when the House met on the 4th of March, 1830, the Speech from the Throne contained the following paragraph: "His Majesty having been graciously pleased to confer on his Roman Catholic subjects of Great Britain and Ireland, the same political rights and privileges which heretofore had been alone enjoyed by his Protestant subjects, I have it in command from His Majesty to call upon you to adopt such legislative measures, as will relieve the Roman Catholics of this Colony from the civil disabilities they have labored under, in common with their brethren of the United Kingdom."

Two days later the House waited on the Governor with an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, setting forth their complete agreement with the sentiments expressed by His Excellency, and declaring their entire willingness to carry into effect the suggestions contained in the Speech. "It is a matter of congratulation," was said in the reply, "that the period has arrived when, by a great measure of State policy and national justice, the civil disabilities of His Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects in Great Britain and Ireland have been removed, and that His Majesty has been graciously pleased to extend his paternal regard to the condition of his faithful subjects of that persuasion in this Island."

In accordance with the good intentions thus expressed by the Legislature, a bill was introduced entitled: "An Act for the Relief of His Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects," and after some discussion, it passed the third reading on the 18th of March, when it was sent up to the Legislative Council for adoption. Here it met with some opposition. The members of the Upper Chamber did not find it entirely to their liking, and they added a series of amendments to which they invited the consideration of the Assembly. Of these

amendments some were merely of a verbal nature, adding nothing new to the scope of the bill, but intended rather to explain its provisions. Others again were more specific in their bearing, such as the one relating to the exclusion of the Jesuits, of whom those councillors seemed to have entertained needless fears and suspicions.

But the one that created the greatest dissatisfaction was a clause suspending the action of the whole bill until the Royal assent was obtained : an unnecessary precaution, since the Royal pleasure had been sufficiently manifested by the despatch received from the Colonial Secretary. The Lower House refused to accept the suspending clause, and Messrs. Cameron, Brecken, Owen and Lewellyn were appointed a Committee to confer with the Legislative Council regarding the proposed amendments, with the result that the suspending clause was withdrawn, other objectionable features eliminated, and the bill, thus made satisfactory to all, passed both Branches of the Legislature, and received the assent of His Excellency, on April 28th, 1830.

From this time it became lawful for Catholics to elect, or be elected members of the House of Assembly, to hold, exercise and enjoy all civil and military offices in the Colony, upon taking the following oath :

“ I, A. B., do sincerely promise and swear that I will be faithful, and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George IV, and will defend him to the utmost of my power against all conspiracies and attempts whatever which shall be made against his Person, Crown or Dignity ; and I will do my utmost endeavor to disclose and make known to His Majesty, his heirs and successors, all Treasons and Traitorous conspiracies which may be formed against him or them. And I do faithfully promise to maintain, support and defend to the utmost of my power the Succession of the Crown, which Succession by an Act entitled ‘ An Act for the further limitation of the Crown and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the subject ’, is, and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress of Hanover, and the Heirs of her Body, being Protestants ; hereby utterly renouncing and abjuring any obedience or allegiance unto any other person claiming

or pretending a right to the Crown of this Realm. And I do further declare that it is not an article of my Faith, and that I do renounce, reject and abjure the opinion that Princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, or any other authority of the See of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects or by any person whatever. And I do declare that I do not believe that the Pope of Rome or any other Foreign Prince, Prelate, Person, State or Potentate hath or ought to have any temporal or civil jurisdiction, Power, Superiority or Pre-eminence, directly or indirectly within this Realm. I do swear that I will defend to the utmost of my power the settlement of property within this Colony, as established by the Laws; and I do hereby disclaim, disavow and solemnly abjure any intention to subvert the present Church Establishment as settled by Law within this Realm. And I do solemnly swear that I will never exercise any privilege to which I am or may become entitled to disturb or weaken the Protestant Religion or Protestant Government in this Colony, or any other part of His Majesty's Dominions. And I do solemnly, in the presence of God, profess, testify and declare that I do make this declaration and every part thereof, in the plain and ordinary sense of the words of the Oath, without any evasion, equivocation or mental reservation whatsoever : *So Help me God.*"

The passing of the Relief Bill ushered in the dawn of a happy era for the Catholics of Prince Edward Island. They were now in full possession of their rights as citizens and though, at this distant day, it may appear no more than an act of tardy justice, still to our forefathers in the Faith it meant a great deal.

A writer of that time sums up their feelings in a letter in which he expresses himself thus : " Now, when we are more happily situated, it is to be sincerely hoped that all past prejudices will be consigned to the tomb of oblivion. Let us do unto others not as they have done to us, but as we would wish them to do unto us. Let us therefore call on our Protestant Brethren to unite with us in the choice of fit and worthy men to represent us in the next General Assembly. Let us neither inquire their creed nor their country, provided they are otherwise worthy of our confidence." These sentiments found faithful

echo amongst the Catholics in general. Happy in the fruition of their newly acquired privileges, they were ready to forget past differences, and soon a spirit of mutual confidence grew up between the different classes of the Community. This truth was strikingly exemplified on May 14th of this year, when Reverend Bernard Donald Macdonald, Parish Priest of Charlottetown, was chosen a member of the Board of Education lately organized for the promotion of public instruction on the Island.

About the same time, Reverend John Macdonald, of Glenaladale, returned to Prince Edward Island. He had been ordained priest in Paris nearly five years before, and since that time had exercised the ministry in Scotland. It seems that, after his father's death, the affairs of the Glenaladale estate had gone from bad to worse, and the family were almost continually in a state of financial embarrassment. Hence, in the latter years of Father John's college career, he had been practically abandoned by his friends at home; and though he frequently wrote for money and even tried to induce Archbishop Plessis to intercede for him — which disagreeable office His Grace shifted to the shoulders of Bishop MacEachern — still it was all in vain, for little or no funds were sent to him.

In fact, his mother, who was charged with the administration of the estate, managed the business so badly, and found herself confronted with so many obligations that very often she did not have any money to spare, though at the same time Bishop MacEachern assured the Archbishop of Quebec, that she spent more money in law than would be required to educate her entire family. Father John had inherited a part of the estate, but as yet it yielded him no income and he had no funds, he was forced to make choice between two alternatives, either to give up his studies entirely, or to apply to some charitably disposed person for the necessary funds to prosecute them to the end.

He chose the latter, and applied to one of the Bishops of Scotland, who agreed to defray the expenses of his remaining years in college, on condition that, after his ordination, he would go to labor in the Scottish missions for a term of years proportionate to the amount

of money thus advanced for his education. To this the young man consented, and as soon as he had been ordained, he proceeded to Scotland and took up missionary work in the city of Glasgow where he spent close on five years. Having thus discharged his obligations to the Scottish missions, he decided to return home, and induced a band of Irish emigrants to accompany him by offering them homes on his estate. The *Glasgow Chronicle*, in its issue of April 2nd, 1830, refers to the project, and mentions the inducements held out to the emigrants by its promoter. It says: "About thirty-two families, almost all of the Roman Catholic persuasion, were to sail on Thursday, weather permitting, from Greenock for Prince Edward Island, under the superintendence of Mr. McDonnell, assistant clergyman in the Catholic Chapel of this City. The greater part of them belong to Glasgow and vicinity; but a few of them are natives of Ireland and the Western Isles. We understand they have been promised, on their arrival at their destination, to receive grants of land from Mr. McDonnell, who is a native of the Island and said to possess large tracts of ground there, which he has taken the resolution of letting out to emigrants at a mere trifle, viz: one shilling per acre. Each family averaging three or four children is to receive one hundred acres, and to be furnished with commodious farm steadings, a cow, a horse and other stock which, however, are to be repaid as soon as the emigrants have it in their power."

Encouraged by the prospects thus held out to them, two hundred and six emigrants, with the priest at their head, took passage aboard the *Corsair* for Charlottetown, where they arrived in safety on May 19th, 1830. After a short delay they proceeded up the southern bank of the Hillsborough, until they reached the lands of Father John, whereon they were to settle. Soon a number of small dwellings were put up to accommodate the newcomers, and the parish of Fort Augustus thus began to emerge from the silence of the surrounding forest. Father John went to live with his mother at Glenaladale, where he remained some years, combining the duties of landlord and pastor amongst the people who lived on his estate.

One of the immediate effects of the recent legislation was to render

Catholics eligible to a seat in the House of Assembly, and a vacancy occurring at this time, owing to the prolonged absence from the Colony of one of the representatives of Queen's County, the moment was deemed favorable to test public opinion regarding the privileges newly acquired by the Catholic population. Mr. Donald Macdonald, of Charlottetown, was accordingly nominated by the Catholics, and the Protestants, in a spirit of broadminded toleration, permitted his return without opposition. He was therefore elected by acclamation on the 10th of June, being the first Catholic thus honored in Prince Edward Island. His election, however, served no immediate purpose, for two weeks later King George IV died in London, and by his death the Legislature of the Island was dissolved, and a general election rendered necessary.

This being the first occasion that Catholics were allowed to go to the polls, speculation was rife concerning the outcome. Party feeling ran high, and religious prejudices were apt to be appealed to, and people as a rule looked forward to the issue with deep anxiety. Bishop MacEachern, especially, shared in the concern manifested on the occasion, and he warned his people to refrain from violence, and practise a spirit of forgiveness and toleration in all things. In this he was ably assisted by the priests under his charge, especially by Father Macdonald of Charlottetown. Many of the candidates, too, spoke out in favor of the new state of things, and welcomed their Catholic fellow-citizens to a full participation of their civil rights. Mr. John Brecken, on being nominated in Charlottetown, spoke as follows :

“ Since I last had the honor of addressing you from this place, Gentlemen, a most important, and I doubt not, salutary revolution has been wrought in the Constitution of this Colony : that exclusive barrier that had hitherto constituted a man's religion as the test of his political character is now no more ; religious distinctions are at an end ; and our Roman Catholic Brethren, I am happy to say, have at length been admitted to an equal participation in political rights with their Protestant fellow-subjects. Of the beneficent results which must follow this enlarged and liberal policy I have every

confidence, and without referring to the past, I trust the future will alone be marked by a zealous emulation, both in Catholic and Protestant, in their endeavors to promote the best interests of the Colony."

What seemed to create the greatest concern in the minds of those interested was the oath demanded by law of the Catholic electors. It was a lengthy formula, and being new, was little understood by the common people. It would therefore necessitate many explanations, for the people of that day were not accustomed to swear lightly or without due deliberation. It was feared, therefore, that much time would be consumed on election-day, and that many would perhaps abstain from voting entirely, through fear of taking the oath; and so a suggestion was made by a Catholic writer in the *Royal Gazette*, that magistrates should be appointed to administer the oath to the electors before the latter would present themselves to the Returning Officers. But Mr. Binns, one of the candidates for Charlottetown, and a prominent lawyer of the day, put matters right by explaining that the oath was not obligatory unless peremptorily demanded in the name of a candidate, and could be dispensed with entirely, if all parties were so agreed; and having argued along these lines, he concluded by saying: "I hope no candidate will long have it in his power, during the heat of an election, and at the hustings, to question the loyalty or principles of any elector." And the principle which he here advocated he was the first to practise, as was shown on election-day in Charlottetown, when the Catholics cast their votes at the polls, unchallenged as their Protestant fellow-citizens. The same is true of the whole Island. The election passed off in the greatest harmony, and just as if Catholics and Protestants had long been accustomed to act together in political campaigns. "Too much praise," remarked the *Royal Gazette*, referring to the election in Charlottetown. "Too much praise cannot be bestowed on all three candidates on this occasion, who mutually agreed to dispense with the oath to be taken by Roman Catholics if required, and to refrain as far as possible from administering oaths of any kind to the voters, on their coming to the Poll, nor, in the sequel, was a single oath administered to a voter during the election. Indeed, the election throughout was conducted

in the most liberal and amicable manner: the parties never for a moment ceased to maintain towards each other the deportment of gentlemen, and the conduct of the large assemblage of electors and other spectators was marked by the greatest harmony and good humor." (*Royal Gazette*, Oct. 5th, 1830).

The result was a signal triumph for the principle of toleration and mutual forbearance proclaimed by Bishop MacEachern, and the candidates, as well as their supporters, did not fail to appreciate the salutary influence wielded by the holy Prelate. This was true especially in King's County, where the Catholics were most numerous, and where four of their numbers had been elected to the Legislature on this occasion. When the result of the election was made known, the successful candidates and a number of their supporters sat down to a banquet in Hayes' Tavern, at Morell. Hugh Macdonald, Esq., member-elect for Georgetown, occupied the chair, and Dr. Conroy, of Charlottetown, filled with acceptance the chair of Vice-President. A number of toasts were duly honored and conspicuous: amongst them was the health of Bishop MacEachern, which was drunk with great cheering. In proposing the toast, Dr. Conroy said: "He felt that any eulogy he might pronounce on the Bishop's character could not add to that esteem and veneration they all felt for him, the dignity of whose office was adorned by the piety of the man; and whilst they all knew him as the comforter of the sorrowful, the friend of the poor and the solace of the sick, in the discharge of his sacred duties,

He tried each act, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way."

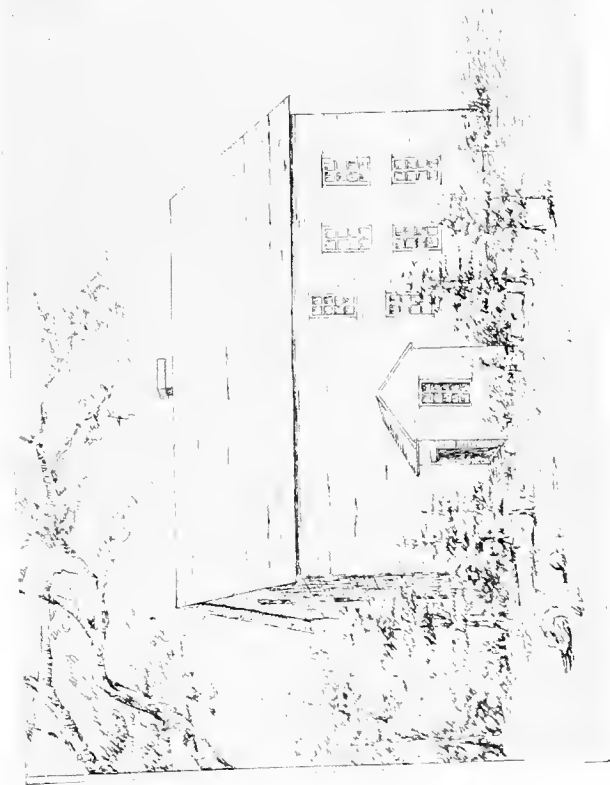
The Apostolic Bulls appointing Bishop MacEachern to the See of Charlottetown were a long time on the way from Rome, and on that account, he was not able to take formal possession of his new charge till near the end of the year 1830. As the change had been effected with the full consent of the British Government, and almost immediately after the passing of Catholic Emancipation, he deemed it right to take possession of the See with as much solemnity as possible, and accordingly, two Notaries Public were chosen to record the

proceedings that characterized his solemn entry upon his new official duties. The Act drawn up by them on the occasion, which is carefully preserved in the Registry Office in Charlottetown, is as follows : “Æneas Bernard MacEachern took possession of the Bishoprick of Charlottetown in the year 1830, on eleventh November, Thursday, in the forenoon. James H. Conroy and Dennis Reddin, acting as Notaries Public and residing at Charlottetown, having accompanied the Right Reverend Æneas Bernard MacEachern, formerly Bishop of Rosen, Suffragan and Vicar of the Archbishop of Quebec, now nominated Bishop of Charlottetown, from his house and having read the Bull of the Sovereign Pontiff bearing date the eleventh day of August, 1829, which assigns to the said Bishop the Bishoprick of Charlottetown, comprehending the Island Prince Edward, New Brunswick and the Magdalen Islands, and the Right Reverend Bishop having declared that he took the oath of fidelity to His Britannic Majesty King William the Fourth, in his new capacity of Bishop of Charlottetown, before His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor and Council of this Province, having knelt before the door of the parochial house to testify his entry into the town of Charlottetown, and then advancing to the Catholic church of Charlottetown accompanied by a numerous concourse of people and having entered, kissed the High Altar, was seated and was received, as Father in God and Bishop of Charlottetown, by kissing of his hands and all the other ceremonies required on such occasions, *Te Deum* recited ; at which act of taking possession no person made any opposition. Therefore, the said Bishop Æneas Bernard MacEachern, in actual possession of his said Bishoprick, requests the said Notaries Public to certify this act by their signatures. This act was done and executed in Charlottetown, where the said Bishop Æneas Bernard MacEachern, in the presence of many respectable persons, who were in the Catholic church at the time of his taking possession of said church and Bishoprick, took actual possession of his said Bishoprick. In which instrument we the said Notaries Public have hereunto subscribed our names.”

DENNIS REDDIN,

JAMES H. CONROY.

Charlottetown, 11th November, 1830.”



ST. ANDREW'S COLLEGE.

CHAPTER XXXV.

FOUNDING OF ST. ANDREW'S COLLEGE.—FATHER WALSH.—CHURCH IN CHARLOTTETOWN ENLARGED.

On assuming independent control of the Diocese of Charlottetown, Bishop MacEachern found himself face to face with a problem, which had appealed to his sympathies ever since his arrival in the country. This was no other than the scarcity of priests in the district entrusted to his spiritual care. In New Brunswick and the Magdalen Islands many souls were craving in vain for the "Bread of Life," while in Prince Edward Island, only three priests were found to share with him the charge of a numerous and ever-increasing population. Heretofore, as this unsatisfactory state of things filled his mind with anxiety, he had appealed to the Bishops of Quebec, upon whom he endeavored to impress the necessity for immediate and effective action; but now the responsibility rests entirely with himself. He is now Bishop of Charlottetown, with full and independent jurisdiction, and with him alone lies the obligation of taking the necessary steps to provide priests for his Diocese.

His first move in this direction was to write to London, where a number of French clergy were now residing, because of the recent unsettled state of political affairs in their native country. He hoped that some of their number might be induced to come to the Diocese of Charlottetown, and take up missionary work amongst the Acadians. In this, however, he was disappointed. Missionary life, amid the cold and privations of the Maritime Provinces, offered no inducement to priests who had enjoyed the comforts of well-

regulated parishes in France; and hence they were now as little inclined to come hither, as their predecessors had been in the years that followed the Revolution.

The Archbishop of Quebec manifested his kindly interest in the new Diocese by permitting those of his priests who were laboring in New Brunswick and the Magdalen Islands to remain at their posts; but he informed Bishop MacEachern that, should they insist on returning to their own Diocese, permission to do so could not lawfully be refused them. At the same time, he advised him to establish a college with as little delay as possible, for the education of a native clergy, and reminded him in strong language of the inconveniences that might follow, if strangers were received into the Diocese and entrusted with the care of souls.

In answer to this kind letter of Archbishop Panet, Bishop MacEachern says: "Your saying that you would allow such of your clergy as are stationed in this district to remain if they choose is as much as I can reasonably expect. Yet I hope that you will for some little time supply, from Canada and with Canadians, the missions of those who will prefer returning to their native country. Whatever I may do to ameliorate their condition, I will do nothing to deteriorate their means of support."

After politely thanking His Grace for his advice concerning the founding of a college, he adds: "I had a meeting last summer of the most respectable of our people, in order to raise ways and means to educate from our own youth a number of students, not only for the Church, but also for any other secular employment, which meeting had the desired effect, by taxing ourselves with an annual quantum for the purpose above mentioned."

With the same end in view he crossed over to New Brunswick during the summer, and issued a circular letter to the clergy and people, dated at Richibuctou, July 23rd, 1831, in which he says: "Having received an official letter from the Sacred College of Cardinals bearing date Rome, November 27th, 1830, requesting that I would inform the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda, what means are in my possession for establishing and supporting a School or

Seminary in the Diocese for the educating of youth for the Church, I come to communicate my ideas to you and to claim your assistance. Although His Grace the Archbishop of Quebec, in a letter dated last year, tells me that he will allow such of his missionaries as are employed in this Diocese to remain with us ; yet it is incumbent on me to lay before you the absolute necessity of raising clergy for ourselves and the fast-growing generation. My income is so slender that I cannot from any revenue I have promise to support an establishment of this magnitude. But if the whole of the Diocese would contribute a something annually, it appears to me that a preparatory Seminary might be established and supported among us."

He then submits to their consideration the plans which he had conceived for founding a college ; and in the first place he suggests that a contribution be asked from the people, which for greater convenience may be paid in kind. This, he thinks, would do quite well, since " live stock would be useful for the support of the boys in the House, and grain could be turned to account and bartered for the necessities of life."

He next refers to the St. Andrew's Farm, which was at this time in a high state of cultivation, and which he intended to hand over for the use and support of the institution.

Of the building to be used as a college he speaks as follows : " The house I live in is 38 by 30 feet, two stories high, with good cellar, and, with the exception of one room and bed, may be used till something on a better plan can be made."

A point insisted on is that parents are not supposed to have the choice of sending their boys to the school indiscriminately ; but in every instance candidates for admission should be furnished with a recommendation from their respective missionaries.

The circular concludes with these words strongly suggestive of the man and his character : " Whether I will be aided or not by my Diocesans, if I can get a proper teacher, I will open a school."

By these closing words, it would seem that he did not entertain very sanguine hopes of assistance from his flock in New Brunswick, and the sequel proved that he was not mistaken. Generally speaking,

they did not regard with a favorable eye the placing of a diocesan college in Prince Edward Island, and were consequently not disposed to contribute much towards it, whatever they might have done had it been built in their own Province. Hence, some time after this, in a letter to the Archbishop of Quebec, he complains that they had not yet returned a satisfactory answer to the proposal and had therefore done nothing to further the work.

After issuing the circular above mentioned, Bishop MacEachern visited the principal centres of population from Miramichi to St. John, spending his time as he himself said, “ always in the confessional, except at night, meal-time and Mass”, and then visited Halifax to see Bishop Fraser, before returning to his home in Prince Edward Island.

In Halifax he met with Reverend Edward Walsh, an Irish priest, who had come out with a band of emigrants in the preceding year. Before coming to Nova Scotia, Father Walsh had taught some years in one of the Irish colleges, and on this account, Bishop MacEachern judged that he would be a suitable person to place at the head of the new institution, if he could be induced to assume the responsibility. The matter was discussed between the two Bishops and Father Walsh, with the result that the latter consented to come to Prince Edward Island and become the first rector of the new college. Bishop MacEachern, therefore, returned home in great spirits ; the parochial house at St. Andrew’s was soon fitted up for its new purpose, and on the 30th of November, 1831, it was formally opened under the name of St. Andrew’s College.

The Press of the day contained the following reference to it : “ We understand that the New Seminary called St. Andrew’s College, at the head of the Hillsborough, was opened on the 30th November, 1831, being St. Andrew’s Day. This Institution established under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Charlottetown, and of the Right Reverend Doctor Fraser, of Nova Scotia, is presided over by Reverend Mr. Walsh, a Roman Catholic Clergyman, of whose literary attainments report speaks very highly. A Professor of Mathematics has also been appointed, etc. ¹.

1 — *Royal Gazette*, December 20th, 1831.

Such was the humble beginning of the first college established in Prince Edward Island. Scarcely, indeed, should it be called a college, as it was no more than a kind of high school, where young men received the education necessary to enter on their higher studies in foreign seminaries. But, though humble in its origin and unpretentious in its claims, it served its purpose well. From its walls came forth a band of young men, afterwards raised to the priesthood, who stood ready to take up the flaming torch of Faith as it fell from the pulseless hands of the pioneer missionaries, and transmitted the same to the present generation together with the tender memories of their saintly lives.

The founding of St. Andrew's College, amid difficulties so great and with resources so meagre, is a monument to the foresight and zeal of Bishop MacEachern, and had he accomplished nothing further for the welfare of religion in the Diocese of Charlottetown, this alone should be enough to stamp his name in letters of gold on every page of its subsequent history.

The Catholics of Charlottetown had been steadily increasing in those latter years. They had, in fact, increased so rapidly that they had completely outgrown the capacity of the little church in which they had hitherto met for divine worship. They therefore found it necessary to enlarge, it, and early in this year they had begun to collect funds for that purpose. In the course of the summer the work was commenced and it went steadily forward during the autumn months, under the guidance of the pastor, Reverend Bernard Donald Macdonald. To stimulate the people to more generous efforts he invited Father Walsh to preach to them on a certain Sunday, and the latter having expressed his willingness to do so, his coming was duly announced in advance. Father Walsh was a speaker of rare power and pathos. He had already preached in Charlottetown on one occasion, and the impression which he then created was so deep and lasting that, though the weather was very unfavorable, the people now came in crowds and occupied every available place in the church. Many Protestants, too, were present, conspicuous amongst whom was Lieutenant Governor Aretas W. Young,

who had succeeded Colonel Ready in the month of September. The people were not disappointed, nor was the pastor, for the sermon was eloquent and the amount of the collection considerable. The circumstance furnished a noteworthy instance of the tolerant spirit that prevailed in the community, and which elicited from the pen of a contemporary writer the following comment; “ We noticed His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor among the audience, to whom, as well as to every truly liberal mind, it must have been a source of pleasure to witness so many of the Protestant inhabitants assembled to assist their Catholic brethren in the important work in which they are eagaged. The building has been considerably enlarged, and the improvement, both in its internal arrangement and in its general appearance, cannot fail to strike the eye of the observer ¹ ”.

1 — *Royal Gazette*, December 20th, 1831.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE ACADIAN MISSIONS.—CHARLOTTETOWN.—FATHER JOHN MACDONALD.
—ST. ANDREW'S COLLEGE.—BISHOP MACEACHERN AT ST.
JOHN.—HE BUILDS A HOUSE AT CANAVOY.

The years that now claim our attention are singularly barren of material for the historian of the Church in Prince Edward Island. No event of particular importance appears, to add heightened color to the web now being woven in the loom of time, and for three years our history moves on calmly and peacefully like the sun-kissed surface of a quiet stream. Good work, nevertheless, was being accomplished for God and Holy Church, albeit in a quiet and unpretentious manner.

The Acadian missions in charge of Father Perry were steadily increasing in population, and showed signs of marked improvement in temporal and spiritual affairs. Their circumstances were much improved in every respect. They had better and more comfortable homes, and their spiritual wants were being attended to as well as could be expected, with only one priest to serve a region so large and a people so numerous. Father Perry's position was no sinecure. He was ever on the move, and seemed always to be found exactly where he was most needed. His labors during these years belong not to history. They were performed without show and often in secret, and with a spirit of generous unselfishness that made him the idol of the people whom he served.

Father Bernard Donald Macdonald resided in Charlottetown, where

a congregation ever increasing and ever changing furnished him with abundance of work. He was a mild and sweet-tempered pastor, who seemed to have well understood the words: "Learn of me for I am meek and humble of heart." He was well and deservedly loved by his flock, and the amount of good done in his own gentle, unassuming manner is known only to Him "who hath made the hearts of every one of them, who understandeth all their works."

Father John Macdonald lived with his mother and brother at Glenaladale. He had spiritual charge of all the tenants who had settled on his estate, and said Mass for them at such places as best suited their convenience, and added to his dual office of pastor and landlord the duties of land-agent for his brother Lieutenant Roderick Macdonald.

The tenants with whom Father John had to deal were, in many instances, a stiff-necked and refractory class of people. They were mostly emigrants from Ireland and Scotland, or immediate descendants of such, and were full of the notion that landlordism was a deadly exotic utterly unsuited to the free soil of Prince Edward Island. Father John's position became supremely irksome. It involved him in family quarrels and lawsuits, as repugnant to his feelings as they were incompatible with his calling. The people, too, were dissatisfied, and sometimes gave vent to their feelings in terms of scant courtesy. They had nothing to say against him in his priestly capacity, nor indeed could they find any fault on this head, as Bishop MacEachern bears witness; but being a landlord as well as land-agent, and being perhaps too closely identified with the affairs of his family, he was frequently the butt against which broke the arrows of prejudice and malice directed in reality against the system of which he was unfortunately the representative. Often, indeed, did he offend when his sole aim was to confer a favor, so prone were his people to misrepresent his views and impugn his motives.

At length, having grown weary of his circumstances, he resolved to go abroad and seek a place where he might exercise the duties of his calling free from the petty annoyances that fell to his lot in Prince Edward Island. He accordingly left for Canada, much to the disap-

pointment of Bishop MacEachern, who had been hoping all along, that the difficulties in which he was placed would finally adjust themselves, so as not to hinder him from laboring in a locality where his services were so much needed, and where his knowledge of English, Gaelic and French gave him exceptional facilities for effective missionary work. He did not stay long in Canada, however; he soon returned to his former post, where he succeeded in dispelling many old prejudices and creating a better understanding between himself and the people in general.

Father Walsh, in a short time, placed the new college on a firm and progressive footing. Before Christmas of the first year about twenty students were enrolled, some of whom came from the neighboring Provinces. The curriculum comprised Greek, Latin, French and Mathematics, as well as, besides, the subjects usually taught in an ordinary commercial course. On Saturday, August 25th, 1832, the institution was honored by a visit of Lieutenant Governor Young, accompanied by Lady Young, their two daughters and some gentlemen from Charlottetown. They were received by Father Walsh and entertained at luncheon, after which the students, dressed in the college uniform, were presented to the Governor and his Lady. Though the visit was entirely unexpected, the boys were equal to the occasion, and one of their number came forward and read an address, a part of which was evidently intended for a play of words on the name of the Governor and his family. It said in part: "We, the students of St. Andrew's College, with the most profound respect, beg to assure you that we duly appreciate the great honor Your Excellency has conferred on us this day in visiting our establishment."

"It is young, its members are young, and whilst they advance in years, and till they are old, they will never cease to wish that your young family may never enjoy less happiness than they have imparted this day to the students of St. Andrew's College."

His Excellency said in reply: "To meet the students of St. Andrew's College gives me much pleasure, and it is not a little enhanced by their kind reception of me and their flattering expressions."

“ It will be a source of satisfaction to me to reflect upon having met with young men who promise so fairly to do credit to themselves in their future walks of life, and to evince to their friends and the community the advantages they have derived from the abilities and care that have been bestowed upon them. In offering the tribute of my respect to the Lord Bishop and his able assistant, Rev. Mr. Walsh, I but feebly express the sense I entertain of their merits.”

When the College had been in operation about a year, and seemed established on a firm and lasting basis, Bishop MacEachern deemed the time opportune for carrying out his intention of handing over to it the church property at St. Andrew's. Accordingly, on the 18th of January, 1833, he executed a deed conveying to a board of trustees the St. Andrew's farm, and on the 21st of the same month, Honorable Mr. Brennan, one of the Members for King's County, presented to the House of Assembly a petition praying for the Incorporation of the new trustees and their successors in office. The original Board of Trustees was composed of Bishop MacEachern, Bishop Fraser, Reverend D. Macdonald, Reverend Sylvanus Perry, John Small Macdonald, of West River, Daniel Brennan, Charlottetown, Angus Macdonald, Three Rivers, and Donald Macdonald, Tracadie.

The Act of Incorporation granted by the Legislature, in accordance with the petition, provided that all vacancies on the Board of Trustees should be filled by a majority vote of those entitled to a voice in matters appertaining to the College.

The right to vote was granted to all those who had paid annually, to the support of the College, the sum of three pounds for at least two years previous to the time of voting; and to those who might have contributed by gift or otherwise the sum of forty pounds, which would entitle them to vote at every election during their lifetime.

Should there exist no such contributors, any five of the actual trustees might elect; but trustees so elected could not act until registered as such in the Registry Office of the Province. Another provision of the Act was that the Trustees should keep a Register for by-laws, college-rules, minutes of meetings and list of contributors to the funds of the Institution; and this Register should always be

open to the inspection of the Lieutenant Governor and House of Assembly.

No religious test was to be admitted, no interference was to be tolerated with the religious convictions of the students, and only the Catholic boys should be compelled to assist at the services of the Catholic Church.

The Act of Incorporation passed both Branches of the Legislature, and received the assent of the Governor on the 6th of April, 1833.

In the following session the House gave a striking example of the broadminded spirit that animated its members, by voting the sum of fifty pounds towards the support of the College, an amount which continued to be paid annually until the institution was closed.

Having made over the property at St. Andrew's and turned his house into a College, Bishop MacEachern might well apply to himself the words of the poet :

He entered in his house—his home no more.

The home that had been his for years was now devoted to other purposes ; it had become the resort of noisy boys, the scene of active college life. The Bishop, however, did not sever his connection with it entirely. He retained for his own use a room wherein he lodged, when circumstances permitted his making a stay at St. Andrew's, which indeed happened rarely since the care of the Diocese had devolved upon him.

Thus, in the fall of the year 1831, he was called to New Brunswick, where he spent the entire winter. Difficulties had arisen in the city of St. John, which demanded his presence, and when he arrived on the scene, he found matters in such a bad condition that he wrote to the Archbishop of Quebec : " I do not mean to move from this until I can establish some order." He was as good as his word. He remained there till the middle of June, and by that time, matters were fairly on the way towards settling down to their normal condition. He drew up certain rules for the guidance of the people, which he embodied in a letter, and appointed three wardens to aid the pastor in the administration of the financial affairs of the parish.

During his stay in New Brunswick he paid a visit to Fredericton, where he interviewed the Lieutenant Governor and some of the Members of the Legislature, and succeeded in impressing them so deeply with the wants of his flock in that Province, that he obtained from the Government a grant of one hundred pounds for a school which he proposed establishing at Shediac. The latter project he now deemed necessary for the future of religion in New Brunswick, because he had found that both the clergy and laity of that Province were little disposed to support the College of St. Andrew's.

It may be remembered that when there was question of buying the farm at St. Andrew's, the Acadians of Rollo Bay objected to the locality for the reason that it was too distant from their place of residence; and at the same time, they suggested that a site chosen somewhere in the vicinity of St. Peter's would be more suitable for the purpose intended. This objection, as we have seen, was overruled by the majority and St. Andrew's obtained the preference.

Since those days, however, considerable settlements had been formed along the shores of St. Peter's Bay, and Bishop MacEachern, who used to visit them as often as possible, thought the time had come when they should have a church of their own, and in the month of November, 1833, he obtained a grant of twenty acres of land situated at the Head of the Bay to serve as a site for a new church, when the people should find themselves able to build one.

About the same time two students, Ronald MacIsaac and James McIntyre, of East Point, left for Rome to enter the College of the Propaganda. They had been at St. Andrew's College from its beginning, and had consequently made considerable progress in their classical course. By their arrival in Rome, the Diocese of Charlottetown had four students at the Propaganda preparing for the priesthood; but in a short time, their number was diminished by the death of Norbert MacEachern, which occurred on the 13th of July, 1834. He had spent over five years in Rome, and had just completed his first year of philosophy. His death was a grievous disappointment to Bishop MacEachern. It threw back his hopes of assistance, and made him feel all the more keenly the want of priests in his extensive Diocese.

About seven years prior to this, he had bought from John Stewart, Esq., of Mount Stewart, a tract of land situated at Savage Harbor and known as the Canavoy Farm. Upon it he now decided to erect a house, the counterpart in every particular of his former residence at St. Andrew's. The work of building went on briskly and, before the close of the year 1834, the new house was ready for occupation, and Bishop MacEachern vacated his quarters at the College and took up his residence at Canavoy.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

BISHOP MACEACHERN IN FAILING HEALTH.—HIS LAST ILLNESS.—HIS DEATH AND BURIAL.

The beginning of the year 1835 found Bishop MacEachern gradually succumbing to the infirmities of age. The trying labors of so many years had told upon him, and he went about his duties with a sense of his inability to do justice to the cause which lay so near his heart. His step had lost its former elasticity, his erstwhile erect figure had drooped under the burden of years, while to mount his horse or ascend his gig required a slow and painful effort. The splendid health that he had hitherto enjoyed was now considerably impaired, and in his letters to the Archbishop of Quebec, he complains of feeling unwell, a complaint now found for the first time in a correspondence extending over a period of almost forty-five years.

Still he does not desist from active labor. "I must, at my advanced age," he writes, "after hard labor for forty-four years and seven months in this Island and adjacent coasts, serve a mission as well as the young gentlemen on the Island do." And besides this mission which comprised the whole of King's County, he was obliged to travel New Brunswick and the Magdalen Islands, in order to discharge his episcopal duties.

Finding his infirmities increasing and wishing that his flock should not suffer on that account, he writes to the Archbishop of Quebec, and refers at some length to the advisability of having a Coadjutor Bishop appointed for the Diocese of Charlottetown.

He mentions particularly the difficulties that lie in the way of such an appointment, the principal one of which seems to be, how to provide suitable support for the new prelate. He pictures the clergy

of Prince Edward Island as only straggling missionaries, wandering about from place to place, practically unable to fix their residence in any particular locality. The only mission in the whole Diocese which he considers able to furnish a decent living is the city of St. John, but it would appear from his description of its people that a Bishop would find it exceedingly irksome to live amongst them.

He next takes up the question of the probable candidates for the position. He refers to Reverend Mr. Manseau, whose name had been mentioned in connection therewith, and of whom he says: "He is a good man and of conciliatory manners."

To Father John Macdonald of Tracadie, whose name was also considered, he has no personal objection. He considers him a learned man and well qualified, if he were only separated from his family and freed from the entanglements of land affairs. Entering further into the subject he adds that the Coadjutor, whoever he may be, should be acquainted with the English, French and Gaelic languages, in order to treat successfully with the various nationalities that would fall under his jurisdiction; and the only candidate who possesses this knowledge, joined with all the other necessary qualifications, is the Reverend Bernard Donald Macdonald, "whose uniform regularity of deportment, and disengagement from everything but his duty," he says, "renders him dear and respected in the community."

The question of the coadjutorship proceeded no further, and so, to provide for the spiritual welfare of his flock, Bishop MacEachern created two Vicars General, the Reverend Father Gagnon for the Province of New Brunswick, and Reverend Bernard Donald Macdonald for Prince Edward Island, the latter of whom was appointed April 6th, 1835.

A few days later, the Bishop started on his Easter visit to the missions of King's County, and proceeded towards East Point by way of St. Peter's. At this latter place he put up at the house of Mr. Dugald MacIsaac, where he was accustomed to hold a station, as there was as yet no church in the settlement. When he arrived on this occasion, the people gathered in as usual, and he was kept busy hearing confessions throughout the afternoon. Next morning he again heard confessions,

said Mass, and preached a Gaelic sermon. When Mass was finished, the greater number of the people retired to their homes; but not a few remained to take breakfast at the hospitable home of Mr. MacIsaac. After the morning meal had been despatched, a daughter of the family, who had been serving the guests, sat down to take a hurried breakfast, while the Bishop was standing in the light of a window arranging an *Agnus Dei* for a young woman who had gone to Communion on that morning. They were the only persons in the room at the time. The girl, as she sat at the table, had her back turned towards the Bishop, whilst he, though evidently intent on the *Agnus Dei*, was talking to her in a desultory manner concerning recent political troubles in Spain, a country, by the way, in which he took a lively interest since the time he spent at Valladolid.

The girl suddenly noticed that his speech began to fail. His voice grew hoarse, and his articulation so indistinct as to be almost unintelligible, and she was about to rise from the table, when she heard a dull thud, as the Bishop losing his balance fell helpless to the floor. Terrified at the sight, the girl screamed for help, and the people rushing in raised his prostrate form from the floor and laid him on the bed, from which he had arisen but a few hours before apparently in his usual health. In a little while he partially regained consciousness, but could not speak, and indeed, never spoke distinctly from that time.

Medical aid was not available in Kings' County in those days; so news of his sudden illness was sent with all possible speed to Charlottetown, and late in the evening of the following day, Reverend Bernard D. Macdonald and Doctor Conroy arrived at his bedside.

The Doctor at once pronounced the case hopeless. Indeed, he found his condition so critical that Father Macdonald administered the last sacraments that same night. He rallied somewhat, however, and by signs manifested a desire of being taken home; which desire was reluctantly and sorrowfully granted.

They carried him on his bed to a sleigh, in which he was conveyed down the ice to the mouth of the harbor, and thence by the sea-ice to Canavoy. People on learning of his illness had come from Launching, East Point, St. Andrew's, and from other settlements, many of

whom remained in the neighborhood to accompany him on this journey. It seemed like a funeral procession, to see so many people with heavy hearts wending their slow and mournful way, each one stricken with a keen sense of impending loss.

On their arrival at their destination they carried the dying prelate to his room, where he lingered in a semi-conscious state till Wednesday, the 22nd of April, at the hour of three o'clock in the afternoon, when he laid down the burden of his arduous life and entered into eternal rest.

His body was laid out in vestments under the direction of Mr. Charles Macdonnell, an ecclesiastic, who had succeeded Father Walsh as Rector of St. Andrew's College; and after it had remained well-nigh two days in the house at Canavoy, it was transported to the church at St. Andrew's, where it lay in state for the whole of that afternoon and night. People came in crowds to view the remains, and frequent bursts of uncontrollable grief broke the solemn stillness of the church where they lay. Though it was a time of year when traveling is supremely difficult, there was scarcely a settlement from East Point to Charlottetown that was not represented at his bier.

On the following morning the funeral service was held, at which only two priests assisted. Reverend Bernard Donald Macdonald sang Mass, and Reverend John Macdonald pronounced a touching panegyric, after which all that was mortal of the saintly Bishop MacEachern was laid to rest under the sanctuary of the church, whose building cost him years of anxiety, and which, by the decrees of Divine Providence, was destined to serve as his first monument.

It were simple truth to say that no death in Prince Edward Island had ever occasioned such deep and universal sorrow. Not only was he mourned by the members of his own flock; but all classes and creeds united to bewail the loss of one who had been a benefactor to the whole community. The *Royal Gazette*, in its issue of April 28th, 1835, voiced the sentiments of the entire people in the following obituary notice;

"Died. On the 22nd instant, from the effects of paralysis, the Right Reverend Æneas Bernard MacEachern, Roman Catholic Bishop of Charlottetown and New Brunswick, aged 75. Beloved, respected and esteemed, not only by those of his own persuasion, but by every

member of the community, this truly pious and estimable Prelate has, by his departure from this sublunary scene, after a long and laborious life spent in the unwearied discharge of his official duties, and distinguished by numerous acts of unostentatious benevolence, left a void in society that will be long felt by those who had the pleasure of his acquaintance, and a character as a man beyond all panegyric."

After giving some incidents of the life of the deceased it continues :

" It is now upwards of forty-four years since he came to this Island, where his father and mother had settled, and commenced his labors under the Bishop of Quebec, being then almost the only clergyman in the Island. Under such circumstances, his life was one of incessant toil and privation ; constantly employed in visiting the scattered settlements, in a country destitute of roads or other accommodations, sometimes in boats, at others toiling on foot, he never, even at the most inclement seasons of the year, for a moment shrank from difficulties when called upon to administer the consolations of religion, whether to the European settler or the friendless Indian. Faithful to the last, death itself may be said to have found him at his post ; for, when struck with the disease which proved mortal, he was in the actual discharge of his duty, twelve miles from his own residence."

A writer of that day composed the following Acrostic which he proposed as a suitable epitaph for the deceased prelate :

Birth, title, wealth—mere accidents of time—

In venal verse and smooth sepulchrāl rhyme,

So oft, in spite of all, should damn a name,

Have left posterity a golden fame ;

Opinion deems all monumental lays

Pretence of woe, or mercenary praise ;

Meekest merit's record seems, as Pride's, untrue,

And chance-dealt fame robs Virtue of her due.

Conclude we then here eulogy were vain ?

Even so—and, weeping, check th' applausive strain.

Art, then, be mute ! The loss we have sustained

Can art declare, or shew what he has gain'd—

He who held fast the faith of Christ, and fought

Efficiently the glorious fight, and taught

Reluctant flesh to bow to God ?—His dust

Now rests where long he served ; his soul is with the just.

To mark the spot where the deceased Prelate had been laid to rest, a mural tablet was placed in St. Andrew's church, and upon it a Latin inscription of which the following is a translation :

“ D. O. M.

“ Here lies, in the hope of a blessed immortality, Æneas B. MacEachern, first Bishop of Charlottetown. Adorned with all the virtues that should distinguish a Bishop, he labored with unwearied zeal to promote the glory of God and to forward the spiritual interests of his neighbor. His death brought great and lasting grief to all good men, and to none more than the poor, for whose sake he himself had passed his life in poverty.

“ He died on the 22nd of April, 1835, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, and in the fourteenth of his episcopate ¹.”

I — Latin text of the inscription :

D. O. M.

Hic jacet

In Spem Beatæ Immortalitatis

Æneas B. MacEachern

Primus Episcopus Carolinopolitanus.

Ornatus virtutibus

Quæ Episcopum Commendare debent.

Majorem Dei Gloriam et Salutem proximi

Zelo indefesso procuravit.

Hominibus singulis probis omnibus

Ac maxime pauperibus

Quorum gratia pauper ipse vixit

Æternum sui desiderium reliquit.

Obiit die 22 Aprilis, Anno Christi 1835

Ætatis 76 Episcopatusque 14

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page	4, line 18, instead of	" build,"	read	<i>built.</i>
"	5, " 28, " "	" monastery,"	"	<i>monotony.</i>
"	9, " 16, leave out	" in."		
"	11, " 6, instead of	" see,"	"	<i>sea.</i>
"	33, " 14, " "	" seem,"	"	<i>seen.</i>
"	74, " 30, " "	" strait,"	"	<i>start.</i>
"	96, " 11, " "	" on,"	"	<i>or.</i>
"	138, " 3, " "	" in,"	"	<i>on.</i>
"	150, " 4, " "	" thought,"	"	<i>through.</i>
"	154, " 24, " "	" latter,"	"	<i>letter.</i>
"	198, " 12, " "	" hie,"	"	<i>his.</i>
"	279, " 28, add <i>as</i> after	" and."		
"	293, " 14, read :	<i>as well as the subjects,</i>		<i>etc.</i>

Borrower's Card.

Title. *St. Ignace*
Author. *St. Ignace*
Floor. *2*
Section. *18.8*
Shelf. *6*
Volume. *1*
Number. *1*
Edition.
Borrowed by

Library of the Redemptorist Fathers Boston, Mass.

Rules.

1. When borrowing a book from the library take card from this pocket and sign your name on the card with **pencil** at Borrower's case.
2. Leave card in tray.
3. When returning the book place it on the **Librarian's Table** in Library.

